Chronicles

April 1997

A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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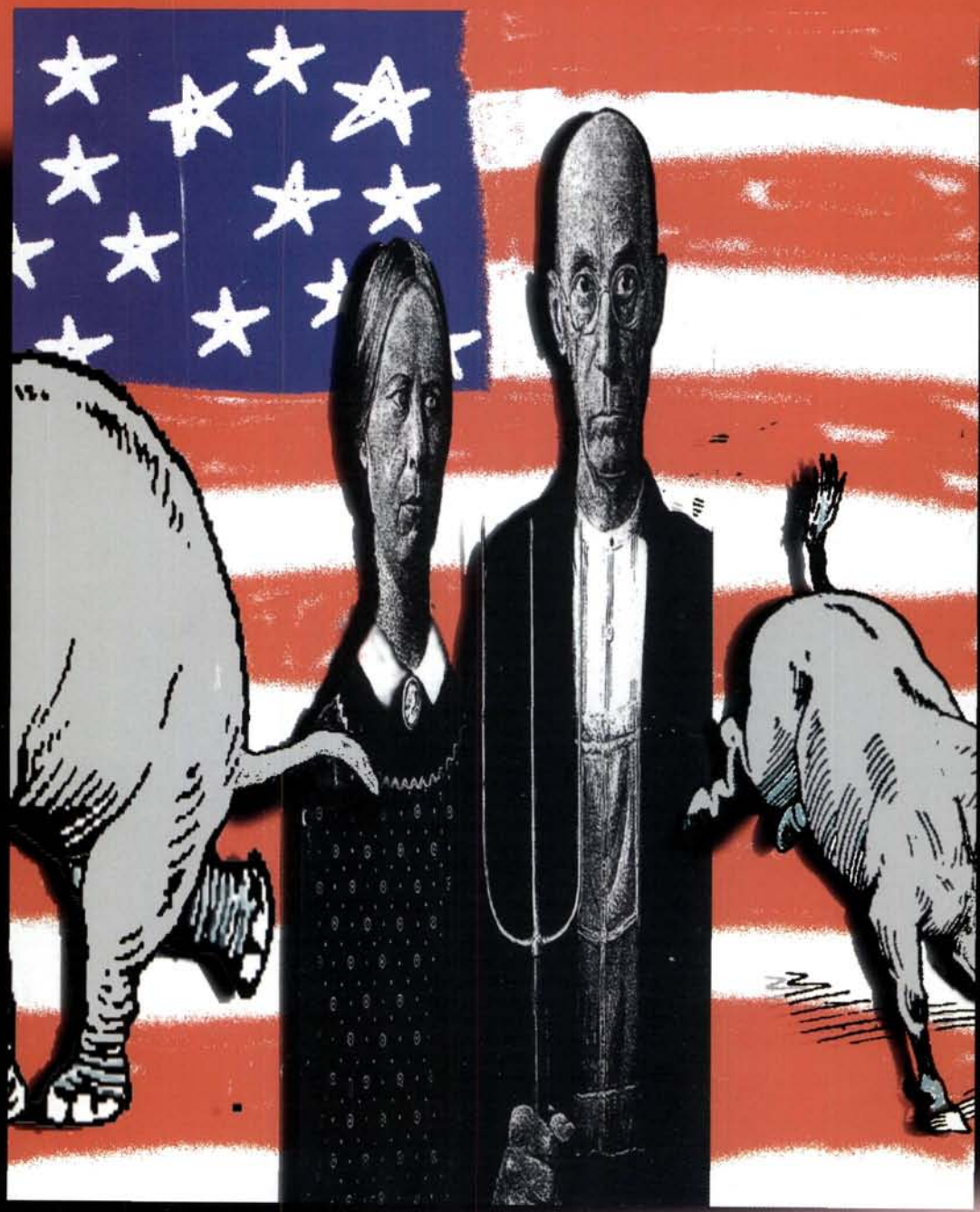

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Why Are Catholics Such Complainers?

You've heard it a zillion times: flaky nuns whining because they can't be priests, homosexuals demanding that the Church approve their "lifestyle," radical feminists bellyaching because God is our Father and the Church isn't "prochoice," dissenting theologians shooting their mouths off and berating the Pope.

Why so many whiners and complainers in the Church? If they're in such "pain," as they claim, why don't they seek out greener pastures? Surely it's not uncharitable — though it may be cheeky — to articulate such a *painfully* obvious question!

Recently, New Age-style Catholic priest, Matthew Fox, in an act of exemplary honesty, became an Anglican. No doubt he's much happier now. At about the same time, the Duchess of Kent and the former Bishop of London left Anglicanism to become Roman Catholics. Consider it a kind of "prisoner exchange." (We Catholics got a whale of a good deal here — but that's another story.)

The realignment of Christianity is picking up steam, something we at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW have been advocating ("cheekily," according to *Newsweek*) for years. We take our name from the 19th-century Oxford Movement in England, and our inspiration from the pioneering "papist" pilgrim, John Henry Newman. We are the forum for the new generation of converts to Rome. Among the converts who've written for us are Walker Percy, Russell Kirk, Sheldon Vanauken, Peter Kreeft, George Rutler, Thomas Howard, Ronda Chervin, and Paul Vitz. And we rejoice in the illustrious converts who've enriched the Church throughout history — Augustine, Chesterton, Maritain, Dawson, Muggeridge, Ronald Knox, Dorothy Day, and many more.

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

Vol. 21, No. 4 April 1997

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On Bernard Nathanson

As a reader of your excellent magazine, I wish to take exception to C. John McCloskey's review ("Circles of Hell," March 1997) of Dr. Bernard Nathanson's autobiography. I think it is all very well to applaud Nathanson's decision to become a Christian and to rejoice that he no longer enriches himself on the corpses of the dead babies he has aborted, but what I do not understand is all the admiration being heaped on a man who has so far shown neither contrition nor humility. Instead of accepting responsibility for his evil actions, actions which from his new perspective put him on a level with such mass murderers as Hitler and Stalin, he now blames an abusive father. Perhaps I have missed the item in the newspapers, but I have not heard of Dr. Nathanson going personally to apologize to the families of his victims, nor have I heard of him giving all of his wealth away to an appropriate charity.

The reviewer's motives are, in my opinion, beyond reproach, and those who know him have the highest regard for his character and intelligence. In this case, however, an excessive zeal in a good cause has clouded his judgment, and it was your job, sir, as editor of this magazine, to censor his enthusiasm or reject his review.

—*Thomas Fleming*
Rockford, IL

Dr. Fleming Replies:

It goes without saying that I agree with both your strictures on the review and your admiration of the reviewer, who is known to both of us. However, I should point out that the integrity of our book review section is guaranteed by the autonomy given the senior editor for books and the freedom given to reviewers to express opinions with which the editors of *Chronicles* may disagree. We seek balance not by moderating the excesses of opinion but by printing both sides of the case, which is what we are doing in this exchange of letters.

On the Ruling Class

Right on, Sam Francis ("The Ruling Class," January 1997)! And if you want to get an idea of who the oligarchs are, look at the list of those who put up the two billion dollars for the recent election. Barbra Streisand, the Raidys, etc. As to when the great American experiment of self-government started falling apart, Henry Adams places it with the presidency of Ulysses S. Grant. That, he said, was when the good people left Washington, never to return. If there was any hope at all, it died when what was constitutional became whatever effusions happened to issue from Justice Brennan on any particular day.

Mr. Francis's use of the term "elite," however, bothers me. The OED defines this as the "flower of society" in the current usage (originally, but obsoletely, "the elect," which would indeed be appropriate). Some flowers! There is still a tiny, diminishing real elite out there. People who were brought up in homes of good taste, and who are old enough to have been around when you could get a decent education. Believe it or not, even though I live in New York City, I actually know such a family. But with Gresham's Law at work, what good there is left will certainly be driven out in a generation or two as weeds overcome an untended garden. Where can their children get a decent education? To whom can they look for enlightened role models?

We can take some perverse comfort in considering the trash this tasteless and ill-educated "elite" wallows in. They have no idea of what is good. Look at the art they buy, the music they listen to, the clothes they wear, and the quality of the company they must keep. Who would want to be part of such an elite?

On the other hand, one takes little comfort in Mr. Francis's conclusion that the American oligarchy will be sent to the graveyard. If they are driven out, it will be by persons who wish to take their place. Who will have been their role models? Where will they have been educated? Those new oligarchs will, if history can be taken as a lesson, be an even trashier bunch than the current crowd.

—*Winslow Maxwell*
New York, NY

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On Franklin Pierce

My esteemed friend Chilton Williamson, as is his wont, makes the most concisely brilliant characterization of the Clintons that has been set down on paper ("Four More Years," February 1997). However, even though I know the reference was ironic, I must take issue with his mentioning the honorable President Franklin Pierce even in the same article with those people.

No, Pierce was not a bachelor. One of his children was killed in a train wreck on the way to his inaugural. He continued about his public duties with Roman courage. During the Mexican War, he resigned political office to enlist in the Army as a private, something nearly unknown in American history outside the Confederacy. Hawthorne valued him as a personal friend. (Lots of politicians have cultivated cultural figures, but this was a real friendship; the book is yet to be written.) While the battle of Gettysburg was raging, and before the outcome was known, the ex-President stood on the capitol steps at Concord, New Hampshire, and denounced Lincoln and his war against the South and the Constitution. American patriots should always speak of Franklin Pierce with respect.

—*Clyde Wilson*
Department of History
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC

On Polonophobia

I read with great interest Paul Gottfried's analysis ("Polonophobia," January 1997) of the anti-Polish tenor of the mainstream American media in the post-1989 period. Gottfried is right on the mark when he sees in the current wave of Polonophobia "the fingerprints of the Soviet Empire." As the Polish historian Andrzej Nowak reminds us, since the late 18th century, the dissemination of a skewed image of Poland's history and culture has been a tenet of Russian, then Soviet propaganda ("Russo-Polish Historical Confrontation," *The Sarmatian Review*, January 1997). With few exceptions, American academics and journalists have internalized this warped Russian and Soviet view of things Polish.

Like ideas, phobias have consequences. A case in point is the marginalized status of Polish Studies at American colleges and universities. During the Cold War, the teaching of Polish language, history, literature, and culture was tied to a field labeled "Russian and Eastern European" or "Soviet and Eastern European Studies." *Nomen omen*, the label reminded us what comes first, while relegating Poles, Lithuanians, Czechs, Hungarians, and other "Eastern Europeans" to a regional sideshow. What we sowed in the Cold War era, we now reap: an overabundance of academics specializing in Russian with a concomitant dearth of academics trained in the languages and cultures of Central and Eastern Europe, this at a time of significantly increased student interest in the latter area. One example of this state of affairs can be found at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The student/faculty ratio in Polish and Russian classes offered in the spring 1994 semester at the University of Illinois at Chicago was: Polish 38/1; Russian 24/1. In the spring 1996 semester, the ratio was Polish 57/1; Russian 22/1. Despite this discrepancy in student load, the university administration feels no need to provide its Polish program the level of faculty resources supporting Russian or analogous language programs. One of the merits of Gottfried's article is that it helps us understand how cultural phobias enable elites to perpetuate policies that marginalize those cultures, languages, and histories deemed less worthy.

I urge *Chronicles* to give due attention to the predicament of European studies in general: in the current academic climate Italian and Irish studies fare no better than Polish. Your January issue is an excellent start.

—*Alex S. Kurczaba*
Department of Slavic and Baltic Languages and Literatures
University of Illinois at Chicago

I am grateful to Paul Gottfried for articulating in "Polonophobia" one of the taboos of American public discourse. There is nothing in the article with which I disagree except Gottfried's statement that Polish-American responses to the charges against Poles on behalf of some WASP scholars and leaders of Jewish organizations have been "measured." They have been cowardly. With one exception, the leaders of Polish-American organizations have eagerly competed with the WASPs Gottfried describes in their obsequious servility toward their accusers, blaming their ancestors for attitudes—if not crimes—that would have made the NKVD propaganda doctors proud, and accepting as fact racist movies such as *Shtetl* (whose producer was saved by Polish Catholics he so despises). One spectacular *provokatsiia* the NKVD staged in Poland, the Kielce pogrom, appears in the American holocaust museums as an example of Polish anti-Semitism. When the president of the Polish American Congress, Edward Moskal, dared to protest, the leaders of the American Jewish Committee pulled out of the committee working on improving Polish-Jewish relations.

Gottfried is thrice right in saying that much of the anti-Polish hostility is due to the communist version of history that lingers on in leftist circles in America, be they WASPish or Jewish. Ever since the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, the left in America has put Poland and what it stands for—Catholicism, agrarianism, consciousness of national identity—on the "disappearance" wish list. And ever since Rosa Luxemburg (a Polish Jewish Marxist), the left's policy has been to eliminate or minimize Poland as an independent nation, and thus weaken the philosophical and social ideas which are associated with its history. The left's distrust of these values has outlived the communist empire. Poland is seen as a retrograde bastion of Roman Catholicism, which halted the westward spread of the Marxist revolution in 1920 and now continues to produce troglodyte clergy who stand in the way of reform in the Catholic Church. In that battle, the leftward-looking Polish intellectuals, both in Poland and in Diaspora, have often been coopted as sergeants-at-arms, confirming and lamenting their countrymen's backwardness.

A related problem Gottfried does not mention is that American Jews see their Eastern European history mostly through the eyes of Russian interests, which supplied a fundamental source of that dislike of Polish culture that is part of the Jewish self-image in America. Many secularized American Jews do not want to know of their Polish or Ruthenian roots, of the fact that the Polish state in the 18th century was home to 75 percent of all Ashkenazi Jews, that Jewish self-rule in Poland was only destroyed by the partitions, and that a good number of Polish Jews before World War II were

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strictly Orthodox and did not know the Haskalah. Such Jews as those portrayed in Eliza Orzeszkowa's *Meir Ezofovitch* or Maria Dabrowska's *Nights and Days* are, I feel, an unwelcome memory for sophisticated American Jews. They are remembered as victims of the holocaust but not as part of the Polish nation. American Jews of Eastern European descent do not wish to know that they matured as a political entity within a mid-sized Catholic nation in East-Central Europe, a nation which did not run its own affairs very well and eventually was swallowed up by its neighbors.

As regards Messieurs Weiss and Dershowitz, their eagerness to shout about Polish dirty laundry is a preemptive attack, in view of the fact that during the Soviet period there accumulated quite a bit of Jewish dirty laundry in Poland, starting with Jakub Berman, *éminence grise* of Stalin's security police in the 1940's and 50's, on whose conscience lie the tortured deaths of some 20,000 Polish Home Army soldiers. Berman died in his bed.

John Sack points out that, after World War II, the institutions of the State Security Office were "full of Poles, 150,000 Poles from the antecedents of Solidarity. In places like Gleiwitz, the Poles stood against the prison wall as Implementation tied them to big iron rings, said, 'Ready!' 'Aim!' 'Fire!', shot them, and told the Polish guards, 'Don't talk about this.' The guards, being Poles, weren't pleased, but the Jacobs, Josefs and Pineks, the Office's brass, stayed loyal to Stalin, for they thought of themselves as Jews, not as Polish patriots. And that's why the Good Fairy Stalin, the man who didn't hate the Germans but who abhorred the Enemies of the People, the Agents of Reactionary Elements, the Oppressors, Imperialists and Counter-revolutionaries, be they the Germans, Russians or Poles, had hired all the Jews on Christmas Eve, 1943, and had packed them into his Office of State Security, his instrument in the People's Republic of Poland.

"And now, 1945, the Poles went to war with the Office, shooting at Jews in Intelligence, Interrogation and Imprisonment, the Jews concluding that the Poles were antisemitic, the Poles contending that no, they were only anti the Office."

Intimidated out of their wits, the Poles in this country do not even dare to mention in public this dark chapter in Eastern European history. The recent book on the subject by Jewish author John Sack, *An Eye for an Eye*, has been greeted not with rebuttal, but with silence.

It is a remarkable fact that the fall of communism in Central and Eastern Europe has brought forth nothing like a Nuremberg commission. The Nazis ruled Poland for six years, the communists for 45; arguably the communists ruined even more lives than did the Nazis. But any investigation of the terror apparatus in Poland would yield such a disproportionately high number of secular Jews that Poles dare not undertake it. The search for justice, which Sack rightly notes as a hallmark of Judaism, is a luxury which the Poles cannot, under the circumstances, afford.

But Professor Gottfried has taken a big step toward seeking a just presentation of the Polish nation, a nation which he clearly understands far better than do some Polish intellectuals today. His article is more than a *mitzvah*, and if the Poles are ever granted breathing space to build their own Yad Vashem, the name of Paul Gottfried should feature prominently on the roll of the righteous.

—Ewa M. Thompson
Professor of Slavic Studies
Rice University
Houston, TX

Paul Gottfried's "Polonophobia" in the January issue was a pleasant surprise. Gottfried is right: Poland has become a "whipping boy" for the American media.

It is not the tendency to find more and more reasons to speak badly about Poles and Poland that bothers us at the Polish National Alliance, but the tendency to rewrite the real history of World War II, both prewar and postwar. As Professor Richard C. Lucas (author of *The Forgotten Holocaust*) stated: "History is no longer a science, but a tool of the partisan views, indeed, the propaganda."

Professor Gottfried has touched the tip of the iceberg. For the past several years we have tried to respond in a civilized way to the false accusations and attacks based on false presumptions, to the lack of real knowledge and, in most cases, the cumulated ethnic hatred toward the Poles and Poland, from people who are not historians and who have personal grudges and faulty memories. The case of Yaffa Eliach and her anti-Polish campaign and the list of new accusations in the summer editions of the *New York Times* based on twisted facts and totally wrong assessments (Polish Home Army and the Government-in-Exile in London as perpetuators of Hitler's plans) demonstrate that what we are dealing with is a kind of maniac obsession having nothing to do with "new discoveries" in history but a lot to do with dirty psychological compensation.

—Dr. Wojciech A. Wierzewski
The Polish National Alliance
Chicago, IL

On Religious Studies

Congratulations to Philip Jenkins for his balanced article "Teaching Religion and Religious Teaching" (December 1996). I witnessed the peculiar status of religious studies programs during my undergraduate years (1976-80), when most major public university humanities programs were dominated by people whose various political disagreements were bridged by a shared hostility toward traditional Judaism and Christianity. That hostility translated into an aggressive misinterpretation of the First Amendment which absolutized the establishment clause (freedom *from* religion), while trashing the free exercise (freedom *for* religion) and freedom of speech clauses.

This hostility toward Jewish and Christian faith combined with naiveté regarding religio-political passions, leaving more moderate academics defenseless against movements claiming secular-humanist justification (i.e., based on equal rights and personal responsibility). While militant Afrocentrists, feminists, and Hispanic and "queer" nationalists believed neither in equality nor personal responsibility, secular humanists, already in thrall to therapeutic notions opposed to equality and responsibility, no longer knew what they believed.

Despite their own internal chaos, the insurgents won through aggression and the appearance of certainty. Secular humanists fancied themselves as being universally tolerant, but they were simultaneously fascinated with and afraid of those who seemed certain and ruthless.

Once ensconced in their own autonomous programs, the insurgents set about taking over, beefing up, and agitating for one program after another (remedial skills, minority counseling, English as a Second Language, education, English literature, comp lit, etc.). Need-

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ing a rallying point that would be generic yet visible, the insurgents conceived the "privileged, white heterosexual male," and identified him with "Western civilization" and "Judaism and Christianity." So what if "Europe," "whites," and "Christianity and Judaism" were hardly synonymous? As Jenkins points out, these religions were born in the Mideast and spread through Northern Africa and Asia (and some 90 percent of American blacks are Christians). Thus, devout Jews and Christians teaching religion must be silenced because they are "the enemy," while feminist, Islamic, Afrocentric, and gay theologians may proselytize without fear.

This is the logical result of higher education today, which has sacrificed truth on the altar of the self and permitted certain groups to create God and the world in their own image.

—Nicholas Stix
Brooklyn, NY

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

IMPERIAL WASHINGTON in the 90's is the gaudiest political theater since the Emperor Elagabalus went to his reward, and Clinton's second inauguration was as sophisticated as an Arkansas high school prom, complete with theme—"An American Journey"—and decorations: a mock-up of the President's Bridge to the 21st Century.

The celebration stretched out for a week, with tent shows, church services, and a Sunday night gala performance hosted by Whoopi Goldberg, Candice Bergen, and porn-star Michael Douglas. Baryshnikov limped and shuffled around the stage to patriotic music, and Stevie Wonder (no one this fat can be called "little") performed with a Gospel choir, as the President vainly tried to keep time with his hands.

He repeated his hand-jive performance the next morning at an A.M.E. church service in honor of Martin Luther King, where he was lectured on character and morality by the Reverend Jesse Jackson. They made a perfect pot-and-the-kettle twosome, since the Reverend Jackson's personal and financial shenanigans are a match for Clinton's—Jackson is even said to have faked his role at King's deathbed.

There was some carping, even from Democrats, about the conspicuous expenditure in a bankrupt city, where only two miles from the Capitol, D.C. residents are living in urban squalor. The total bill was something like $43 million, although less than $12 million was being paid for by American taxpayers. The cost seemed particularly extravagant for what is, after all, a repeat performance.

The White House tried to generate a sense of excitement by releasing rumors that Clinton was hard at work on his speech, boning up on previous inaugural addresses and reading poetry. In fact, the President must have had a hand in writing his speech—it was that bad. He began with a series of progressive clichés, how this great nation, founded on the principle "that all men are created equal," ended slavery in the last century, saved the world from tyranny in this one, extended opportunities to women, and ended up as "the world's indispensable nation." The President then declared his new political creed: "Government is not the problem, government is not the solution. We, the American people are the solution." (By Clinton's logic, the people would also have to be the problem.) We were told to hold onto the old ideals of the American promised land, while building a new "land of promise," which would entail "a new government for a new century." We had tried a republic, moved on to democracy, and now it is time for change.

Declaring the "future is up to us," Clinton told Americans that they would have to assume personal responsibility not just for themselves and their families, but for the entire nation. If it takes a village to raise a child, then every child's parent is responsible for everybody else. Or something like that. A bright new day was dawning as we entered the new millennium, with equal opportunity for all boys and girls in the schools of their choice. "Our streets will echo again with the laughter of our children." Yes, I thought, as the Fairy Queen's threats echoed in my head, and "titles will ennoble then, / all the common councilmen, / and a Duke's exalted station / be attainable by competitive examination."

Only W.S. Gilbert could do justice to the Clinton dream. He would have enjoyed the whole day: a children's choir of every combination of race and gender except the white and male, singing about "the rainbow bridge to the 21st century," the President mouthing the words of patriotic songs during Jessye Norman's performance, as if the diva required his assistance, and Chief Justice William Rehnquist's attempt to get through the oath as quickly as possible only to be bogged down by Clinton's bathetic solemnity. Quickly shaking hands with the President, Rehnquist scuttled off the dais without further ceremony, probably in a hurry to get on with the Paula Jones case.

—Thomas Fleming

LEGAL IMMIGRATION, in the opinion of Senator Spencer Abraham (Republican-Michigan), is something we shouldn't do anything "more" about "until we have a fuller debate on the benefits of immigration." The new chairman of the Senate immigration subcommittee insists that he is "not trying to badmouth the other side, but they've had the chance to make their case."

If being allowed to address an audience of hostile deaf mutes in an unventilated auditorium where the sound system has been turned down and the lights have been shut off amounts to a chance to make one's case, Senator Abraham's claim may have some slight basis in fact. As for a "fuller debate," what I called in *The Immigration Mystique* "the unwelcome debate" has deteriorated in the last 12 months into the almost nonexistent debate. The spring of 1996 found Congress addressing the issue with some degree of forthrightness, but the legislators took care to be done with the issue between the primary season and the general election. Thereafter immigration reform—also INS illegalities, Doris Meissner's duplicity, and the Clinton administration's mass production of Democratic voters by a speeded-up nat-

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uralization process—was ignored resolutely by the candidates and their spokesmen. Rumor had it that Jack Kemp accepted the Number Two spot on the Republican ticket after exacting a promise from Numero Uno that immigration would not be made a campaign issue by the Republicans—something that Numero Uno had absolutely no inclination to do anyway. In the spirit of bipartisanship (easily confused with the coming one-party system) Clinton and the Democrats played along with the full cooperation of the media, which chose to aid and abet both parties in their conspiracy of silence.

Immediately following the election the word went out on Washington's mean streets that the new Congress, convening in January, would return to the problem of immigration. In the interim, however, consternation within the Republican Party was sparked by Loretta Sanchez's victory over Bob Dornan and fanned to a small firestorm by immigrationists Linda Chavez and Paul Gigot, whose joyful warnings that the GOP is now perceived by Asians and Latinos as the anti-immigrant party has made it nervous as a racehorse confronted by a mouse. Senator Jon Kyl of Arizona, a restrictionist, waived his seniority to permit Senator Abraham to assume the chairmanship of the immigration committee, even though his own state is suffering an invasion of immigrants from Mexico. An immigrant backlash against the Republicans may or may not be a reality: what matters is that few, if any, American politicians require a valid excuse to shut up about immigration, except to mention it in positive terms.

So here come the positive Republican governors, led by Jim Edgar of Illinois and George Pataki of New York, demanding that Congress amend the Welfare Reform Act of 1996 by restoring benefits denied to legal immigrants by the new law. The Republicans are supported in this effort by the Democratic governors and by the National Congress of State Legislators, now that the election year Reign of Terror by the voters is past and a politician is able to speak out again for compassion and the dignity of man without fear of reprisal. Moreover, if the federal government doesn't pick up the tab once more, the governors will be required to impose a *tax hike* on their nativist constituencies in order to support immigrants who were supposed to be solvent when they arrived here. You can't find a more positive argument than that.

Gigot's attempts at haymaking seem to have had one unintended result, however. In his January 24 column in the *Wall Street Journal*, he ridiculed the editors of *National Review* for having forged an alliance with "neo-Malthusian" restrictionists. These remarks elicited in short order a defense of the magazine by William F. Buckley, Jr., in his own column—the first he has written on the subject of immigration in 30 years. Mr. Buckley expressed impatience with "Ellis Island cultists" and "free-market purists," derided the idea of totally open borders as "libertarian fancy . . . but not very good national policy," and concluded that, "There is a case to be made for reducing legal immigration." Mr. Gigot got more than he bargained for, and in attacking *National Review* he may have tarnished the immigration mystique in the eyes of conservatives.

—*Chilton Williamson, Jr.*

JAMES DICKEY, one of the stars in the American firmament, died this past January. For certain of us, he was the most powerful, the most loved, poet from the 1960's onward. By the time I met him in '67 or '68 he had brought out *Poems 1957-1967*, which included *Buckdancer's Choice*, winner of the 1966 National Book Award. He was on his way to a reading somewhere, and his plane had a layover in New Orleans, so I drove down from my farm in central Louisiana. I was fox-hunting back in those days and knew his poems about the same. We talked some about that, and I listened to him play his guitar. It always went with him then, just like any troubadour's.

He struck me then and later as someone who felt intensely and wanted you to feel the same way. The poem, he thought, is the poet's gift to others, the feeling that "through poetry you are actually enabled to live more, to participate more deeply in your own existence." Above all else, he celebrated the natural world. He said that the natural world was infinitely more important to him than the man-made world, and he did not want, nor did he want others, to lose the deep and necessary intimacy with natural process, the great wheel of existence with its birth and death of plants, animals, and men.

For all his exultation in the physical world, he was a very literary man. Immensely intelligent and widely read, he was a complete man of letters, which included an insightful and wide-ranging critic and, of course, a novelist. It is mildly ironic that if you ask the average American whether he has read Dickey, he acts puzzled, but if you mention the man who wrote *Deliverance*, he smiles and agrees—confirming what many know, that a novelist is almost unknown in America unless a book of his is made into a movie. As Nicole Kidman says in *To Die For*, "You're nobody unless someone sees you on TV."

His poems were very accessible, and I think that was why he had such a large public. Many of us had been reared on Eliot and Dylan Thomas, poetry that seemed to need an interpreter to come along with it to explain the Sanskrit or "Abaddon in the hangnail cracked from Adam," etc. It was Dickey's belief that at least on a "first level," any literate, reasonably educated person ought to be able to understand the poem. He said he wanted to be simple without being thin; something for a child and something for critics that they had not had much of. The dramatic or narrative frame was strongly evident, never some disembodied voice.

Dickey's public performances had much to do with the reinvigoration of young people's interest in poetry. A man of large physical stature, he was of heroic proportions otherwise: fighter pilot with a hundred missions, star football player, musician, canoeist, archer—just name it. He was instrumental in insisting on higher fees for readings, and many poets have benefited. He said if the university can afford to give a football coach two thousand dollars a talk, it could do the same for poets. Panache, yes, but he believed a poet was worth something, not just a surrogate for real action.

A presence such as Dickey's, and presence it was, looming so large on the national landscape, was bound to draw out detractors: other strong personalities, but also the sissies and neuters. He could not easily be ignored. Like the cracking of ice when spring comes, or a fresh breeze in the houseplant world of Eastern taste arbiters, such energy could be threatening, and occasionally the little animals would pack-up to try to bring the big animal down, but they did not succeed. In the beginning I said a star had died, but as we know, its light keeps on coming. As far as we know.

—*William Mills*

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EPICYCLES:

• More Cultural Enrichment: **Santeria**, an Afro-American religion that combines Christian symbolism with pagan practices such as animal sacrifice, has become increasingly popular in immigrant communities, especially in Miami, New York, and Washington, D.C. During the summer of 1989, while D.C. police were finding the remains of chickens and goats in local cemeteries, the Smithsonian Institution sponsored Santeria rituals at its annual Folklife Festival on the Mall. (They also sponsored Palo Mayombe rituals, the "black magic" side of Santeria, which made use of a *nganga*, an iron kettle filled with herbs, animal parts, and human bones.) Spurred on by the Smithsonian, Santeria has become mainstream. As the *New York Times* reported in January, there are now Santeria sites on the World Wide Web (with diagrams of the proper way to sacrifice a chicken?), and a Broadway musical is in the works. While Christianity is no longer an acceptable subject for popular culture, an anti-Christian religion that glorifies violence and spirit possession apparently is.

• The Benefits of Free Trade: Starting this month, one of the lasting icons of American pop culture, **OshKosh B'Gosh** overalls, will no longer be made in America. While most of its products, including its popular Baby B'Gosh line, have been manufactured overseas for some time, the company had continued to make its trademark product in its hometown of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Now that the invisible hand has determined that Mexicans, Chinese, and Dominicans can make overalls better than Americans, look for prices to drop, wages to rise, and peace and economic prosperity to spread like wildfire around the globe.

• Pro-life and anti-euthanasia leaders in the United States who have, like their foes, abandoned **federalism** for the sake of their cause, could learn something from Bob Collins, an Australian senator. The Northern Territory, which he represents, adopted a law legalizing voluntary euthanasia about a year and a half ago. Australia's federal government opposes the territorial law, and a bill to override it will be voted on sometime this spring. Collins, a staunch Catholic who opposes the euthanasia law, also opposes the federal bill. A Northern Territory patriot and advocate of federalist principles, Collins recognizes the danger of giving the federal government power over life and death, even when that government agrees with you.

• Cultural Genocide Continues: Following attacks on the **Confederate battle flag** in South Carolina and Maryland, those who would deprive Southrons of their cultural heritage opened fire on two new fronts. At the end of January, the Virginia Senate, in a surprise move, voted to retire the state song, "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," which contains references to slavery. Since the Senate defeated a similar bill a few years back after the Virginia House had approved it, the demise of the anthem is almost certain.

The battle then swung north to New York, where Republican Governor George Pataki called the Confederate battle flag "a symbol of hate." His partymates in the state legislature followed his cue and voted to remove the Georgia state flag, which incorporates the battle flag in its design, from a display of the flags of the original 13 states. Both Pataki and Virginia Governor George Allen have their eyes on the White House, and apparently neither wants to be upstaged by South Carolina Governor David Beasley. Behind the scenes in all three cases lurks the Christian Coalition and Ralph Reed, who have joined with Jack Kemp in his attempt to "broaden" the electoral base of the Republican Party by alienating Southern whites. Apparently, Reed and Kemp won't stop until the base is so broad that Republicans can't win a single election.

OBITER DICTA: *Chronicles* editor Thomas Fleming will be debating Glen Thurow of the University of Dallas on April 10 in the Gorman Faculty Lounge at the university. The debate's tentative title is "**M.E. Bradford vs. Lincoln**—Equality, Liberty, and American Constitutionalism." Dr. Fleming will be representing M.E. Bradford; Dr. Thurow, Mr. Lincoln. For more information, contact Hayden Head, Director of Student Life, at 972-721-5323.

The 16th annual meeting of the **Midwest G.K. Chesterton Society** will be held from June 26-28 at the Archbishop Cousins Center in Milwaukee. Among the speakers at this event will be the peripatetic Thomas Fleming, who spoke at last year's conference. The title of his talk is "Southern Agrarians Look at Capitalism and its Effect on the Family." For more information, write to Ann Stull, 1419 E. 53rd St., Chicago, IL 60615.

Chronicles readers should consider a subscription to ***Middle American News*** ($15, P.O. Box 17088, Raleigh, NC 27619), edited by *Chronicles* contributor Jerry Woodruff. A monthly paper, MAN is an excellent source for updates on a variety of *Chronicles* themes, from immigration to the BATF.

North Dakota poet **Alan Sullivan** has contributed three new poems to this issue. A novelist who turned to poetry two years ago, Mr. Sullivan's work has appeared in many journals in the United States and the United Kingdom, such as *Poetry*, the *Dark Horse*, and the *Spectator* of London.

Chronicles is now sold at the following stores in **Texas**: Book People, 603 N. Lamar, Austin; BR News, 3208 Guadalupe, Austin; Anderson News, 4414 E. St. Elmo Rd., Austin; Barnes & Noble Superstore, 1000 Research Blvd., Austin; Bookstop, 4001 N. Lamar, Austin; Barnes & Noble Superstore, 5000 Westheimer Blvd., Houston; Barnes & Noble Superstore, 5303 FH 1960 West, Houston; Bookstop, 2215 FH 1960 West, Houston; Borders, 10720 Preston Rd., Dallas; Bookstop, 13415 San Pedro Ave., San Antonio; Hastings, 3111 W. Cuthbert Space #3, Midland; Hastings, 5526 Bosque Blvd., Waco; Hastings, 3512 Knickerbocker, San Angelo; Hastings Books, Music & Video, 4654 S. 14th, Abilene; Hastings, 2002 Texas Ave. So., College Station; Hastings, 3518 Lamar Ave., Paris; Hastings, 3916 Kemp Blvd., Wichita Falls; Hastings, 725 Villa Maria, Bryan; Hastings, 3500 N. St. SP #1, Macogdoches; Barnes & Noble Superstore, 934 E. Copeland, Arlington; Barnes & Noble Superstore, 1310 Lake Woodlands Dr., The Woodlands.

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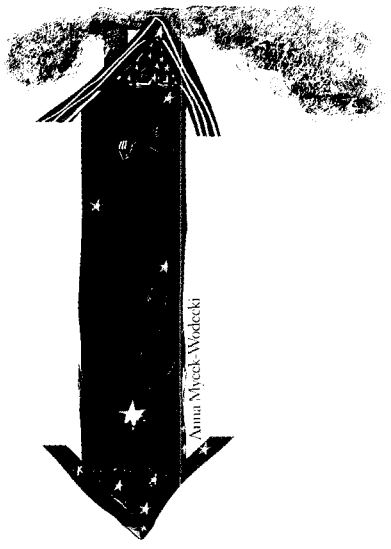

Hanging With Our Friends

by Thomas Fleming

A year and a half ago, Umberto Bossi delivered a brilliant speech in the Italian parliament. Describing Italy's political system as organized corruption, the leader of the Lega Nord declared that left and right showed two faces but were joined into one body. A new Italian regime had to be born, but this two-headed monster, he declared, could not make it through the birth canal. Either the heads had to be separated, or the new Italy would have to be born by Caesarian section.

Even though few of the deputies caught the hint that Bossi intended to declare the independence of Northern Italy, they were outraged by his description of right and left as corrupt collaborators in a regime whose only function was to despoil the taxpayers. In plain English, Bossi was saying that either Italy would find a way of breaking up the power cartel established by the responsible left and the respectable right in combination—and therefore liberate both sides to be themselves—or else more drastic means would be necessary.

Italian history parallels our own experience to a large degree. In its most brilliant periods, Italy was a patchwork quilt of city-states, kingdoms, dukedoms, and papal appendages. Between 1859 and 1869, however, the statesmen of tiny Piedmont, through a series of strategic alliances and double-dealing, managed to unify Italy, establishing the kind of unitary state created in France and Prussia and imitated by the Lincoln regime in the United States.

This Italian state, which barely survived World War I and the economic crisis that ensued, was reforged by Mussolini as a nationalist quasi-socialist regime in the 20's and 30's, and after World War II, this same national-socialist state was ruled by a revolving door of center-right and center-left politicians backed by the Mafia and the CIA—or is that redundant?—until it reached the point of collapse and exhaustion in the 1990's.

Americans can tell the same story, of a federal patchwork beaten into the form of a unitary state during the 1860's, reforged as national socialism in the 1930's by an admirer of the *Duce*, and consolidated by corrupt politicians of center right and left in the postwar period. In our own case, this transformation was even more tragic, since it took place not in a country ruled by foreign monarchs, but in a free republic.

But there is one other essential difference. In Italy, the corrupt regime of the *partitocrazia* is being resisted on several fronts: by the free market liberals in Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia; by the Alleanza Nazionale, which promises to clean the Augean stables of Italian politics; and by the Lega Nord, whose leaders have alternated between calling for a Swiss confederal system and demanding independence for Padania.

Here in the United States, however, where Bossi's metaphor of the two-headed monster is a perfect description of our own system, there is little effective opposition to the regime. There is a conservative movement, and a conservative wing of the Republican Party, and every four years they ask us to support a corrupt and cynical politician as the lesser of two evils. Since the early 1980's, the conservative movement has tended increasingly to act as an echo chamber for the left. The voices may be softer and distorted, but the message is the same: more government at higher levels, less freedom for individuals and local communities, and a relentless pursuit of global empire that will end up destroying the liberties of everyone on the planet.

Conservatives are by their nature inclined to nostalgia. They are like the Southerner that Oscar Wilde described. When Oscar admired the beauty of the moon, the old gentleman replied, "Yes, but you should have seen it before the war." Everything was better in days gone by, we like to believe, and once upon a time there was an organized and principled resistance to the New Deal regime.

The myth of a conservative golden age is comforting but perilous. Apart from businessmen who defended their self-interest (and the journalists they hired), the American experiment in national socialism has, for the most part, gone unopposed, and since December 7, 1941, there has been no organized and de-

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termined opposition to the regime, even from those who claimed to be calling a halt to the march of progress.

I am exaggerating somewhat. Here and there in an economics department there were principled defenders of the free market, and there were even a few poets and philosophers who tried to patch some corner of the crumbling edifice of Christendom, but most self-described conservatives and men of the right were reluctant to face the disapproval of their colleagues and neighbors. They could not stare down all the respectable people who control the media and the universities, who write the advice columns, cheap fiction, adventure films, and comic strips that constitute American civilization. Success for conservatives is almost always defined as winning the respect of liberals, and this timidity provides the psychological explanation of Stan Evans' famous law that whenever one of ours gets in a position where he can do any good, he becomes one of theirs.

The nonthreatening American right lacks the will and the courage to risk unpopularity. Real revolutionaries—Mazzini or Lenin—endure exile and persecution; conservatives cannot even bear a negative review or a snub from Ted Koppel. They dare not challenge the party-state regime.

The regime which the right must find the courage to confront is not the constitutional republic that took shape in the late 18th century, but the Jacobin state knocked together by Wilson and Roosevelt as an analogue to National Socialism in the Third Reich, communism in the Soviet Union, and fascism in Italy. This Jacobin state—which is by its very nature revolutionary and despotic—rests on a series of myths and fictions such as the notion of a General Will that exists apart from the individuals and communities that constitute the societies governed by the state and the doctrine of equality that provides government with the occasion for leveling all distinctions and annihilating every community that refuses to collaborate with the armed expression of the General Will.

On an international level, the Jacobins see only necessities of state, if they are pragmatists, "human rights," if they are leftist idealists, or individual free market liberties, if they are libertine libertarians who recognize no law, no social order beyond the gratification of their appetites. The difficult questions of the Balkans War, then, get reduced to rape camps or ethnic cleansing, because the desire to live with one's own people is inconceivable for individuals who repudiate both loyalty and friendship.

There are any number of diverse strategies that have been used to oppose Jacobin states. The strategy most frequently employed in the United States is the affirmation of the dignity and liberty of individuals against the General Will embodied in the state. This is obviously the classical liberal position but it derives from an older tradition, from the Christian emphasis on the value and dignity of the individual human life, and from the Greek elevation of the human possibility to a level never again achieved.

Since Jacobins are fond of talking about individual rights—and many libertarians are only Jacobins who take money from big business—the classical liberal strategy, by itself, can only hack away at the surface of state despotism. To get down to the foundations requires a more fundamental opposition, namely a counterrevolutionary defense of premodern loyalties of kith and kin, the ties of marriage and family. This was the object of 19th-century reactionaries such as Bonald, when he argued against divorce, and of Sir Walter Scott, when he celebrated the irrational political loyalties of feudalism.

There are vast differences, of course, between Bonald and Scott, Coleridge and Chateaubriand, but, in general, the counterrevolutionary, romantic right defended inherited irrationalities on the grounds that they produce the richness and beauty that give wine its bouquet and life its savour. They also produce (as Burke makes clear in his *Reflections*) the countervailing forces that check the power of the state. A man who is loyal to his family and his chief, who insists upon keeping up the old ways, simply cannot be absorbed into a new order. He must be tolerated or exterminated, and in the fight to exterminate him, a resistance is created.

In the United States, reactionary movements have always taken the form of opposition to innovation: to the increased national authority granted by the Constitution, to the triumphant liberal industrialism of the Northeast that destroyed the first republic, to the imperialism of Roosevelts I & II, and to the New Deal. There is no linear coherence to these movements, and it is unlikely that Calhoun would have sat down to supper with H.L. Mencken. From the perspective of the present, the most obvious division is between libertarians and conservatives. In one important respect, however, the split is an illusion: the sense of individual worth may seem like a universal ideal, while it is in fact a cultural artifact of European civilization. The individual person is less appreciated in other civilizations and hardly exists among savages. Defending liberty is a senseless commitment in societies where they do not know the meaning of the word—and there are whole continents in this condition.

For a real right to develop, it would require men and women willing to be viewed as virtual criminals in the eyes of everyone supporting—or rather supported by—the system. They would have to give up the centrism so engrained in the American character, and they would have to form an open and valid opposition—instead of the *opposizione finta* practiced on both left and right. To be genuinely radical, we have to accept the fact of being enemies of the regime, of being criminals, of being outlaws. In the late 1960's, radical leftists could sing:

> We are the outlaws of America
> Whatever they say we are, we are,
> And we are very proud of ourselves.

They were, of course, nothing more serious than spoiled suburban brats, but the sentiments are admirable.

The left, when it was in opposition, knew its business well: leftists began by constituting a minority counterculture, and little by little they imposed that counterculture on the entire country. Of course, the old-fashioned liberals who controlled the regime between the 30's and 60's were incapable of resisting the counterculture, because for the most part both sides were operating on the Jacobin assumptions, and both sides had a dim understanding that their real enemy was the great American Gothic nation of farmers and villagers with their bizarre attachment to place, to kin, and to religion. Oh, there were Wobblies and Progressives who were as American Gothic as Pitchfork Ben Tillman or W.J. Bryan, but that is because, ultimately, even the La Follettes were enemies of both the capitalists who owned the regime and of the socialists who wanted to share power with them.

In constructing their revolution, leftists of every stripe knew that they had to alienate their followers from the mainstream and to construct social and cultural alternatives: not just a few

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journals and think tanks, but student groups, newspapers, rituals, myths, and martyrs. Unfortunately, most conservatives—like most liberals—are children of the Enlightenment; they are uncomfortable with sentiment, with irrational attachment. Like the bloodless and charmless robots who obey the orders of foreign gurus, conservatives have failed or rather refused to construct a counterculture, a countermythology. When George Wallace—a man with many flaws in his character and black marks on his career—when Wallace actually challenged the regime and whipped up crowds in the Midwest and South into a sentimental frenzy, conservatives not only held back, but they stabbed Wallace in the back, preferring the unprincipled Nixon in the same way that they preferred Bush and Dole to Buchanan.

Wallace and Buchanan were both rejected by conservatives, because they represented a fundamental challenge to the regime, and for any practical purpose other than self-aggrandizement, the American right has been an abysmal failure. If we take just the period since the New Deal, it is clear that conservatives proved themselves incapable of slowing, much less reversing the revolution. Every decade sees the state swollen larger after swallowing the liberties and energies of the people: first in the name of charity, then civil rights, then gender equity and sensitivity. Perhaps defeat was inevitable, but at least there might have been an honorable struggle. Instead, the conservatives have consistently and uniformly sold out to a series of window dummies whom the left might have invented: Dewey, Eisenhower, Nixon, Bush.

What is worse, by concentrating all their energies on getting moderates—that is collaborators—elected, conservatives never seemed to have time to build their own counterculture. In part, it was cowardice; but conservatives are prone to some very dangerous fantasies, such as the fantasy that we live in a Christian country, or the fantasy that the business class is basically conservative, and in funding the left, big business is mistaking its own interest. If only the Kennedys and Rockefellers and Kochs could be made to understand. Believe me, they understand, and that is why they are funding the two-headed monster, and that is why Senator Dole got the Republican nomination.

What right-wing opposition there is in America always manages to fission itself at key moments. In 1992 and 1996, for example, the Buchanan candidacy should have been the occasion of a great rallying of social conservatives and free-marketeers, but both groups allowed themselves to get distracted. Some right-to-lifers fell for the passionate rhetoric of Alan Keyes, as if there were any other purpose to Keyes' laughable campaign except to steal votes from Buchanan, while many libertarians turned against Buchanan because of his protectionism.

Antinationalist libertarians did make convincing economic arguments in favor of free markets and, in real terms, free trade—not the free trade jiggered by NAFTA and the WTO, but the free passage of goods across the borders of free countries. There are, however, libertarians who go much further. They dislike the idea of nations and nationality: they repudiate any loyalty that would compel them to sacrifice a single will to the common good. They reject the whole idea of the common good, opposing not just nationalism and nations, but opposing any form of human community that cannot be reduced to contract. Marriage, for them, is just another contract like the deal made between a prostitute and the man she—or he—picks up.

More sober libertarians freely acknowledge the significance of family, community, and even nation, as structures that are essential for human happiness, and the conservatives who are celebrating the nation see very clearly the importance of free markets and minimal government, and yet they seem unable to cooperate even on the practical level of a political campaign. Is there some magic formula on which they can all agree? Something like Frank Meyer's Fusionism? I hope not. It is embarrassing to think that independent-minded men and women would accept some new creed like the Boy Scout Oath or the Twelve Step Program. Speaking for myself, I already have a creed—and it was adopted at the Councils of Nicea, Chalcedon, and Constantinople in the fourth and fifth centuries. I do, however, have a few suggestions that might, in the future, serve to redirect discussion in channels that might lead somewhere.

On the most basic levels, I think all of us need to be very clear that our enemy is the Jacobin state—not the State itself, as Albert J. Nock mistakenly believed—but the specific state form that has been imposed since the French Revolution. Anything that builds up the Jacobin state is to be opposed; anyone who would reinforce it is the enemy.

We also need to recognize that radical individualism is just one more Jacobin ploy used to destroy all the communities capable of resisting the state. Human rights, minority rights, and all the other rights are inventions of dictators who designed them to suppress the productive majority that constitutes the real enemy of the state. If Clint Bolick is not the lackey of the regime, then there are no lackeys.

National communities, whether of the size of a city-state or of the extent of Canada and the United States, have the right and necessity to defend the interests of their people from international predators, whether those predators take the form of an opposing nation such as Russia or Germany, a hostile ideology like communism, international agencies like the U.N. and WTO, or parasitic transnational business conglomerates that suck the life out of their hosts and hop off to Mexico or Singapore in search of fresh blood. So long as a nation-state exists, it has the duty to defend its citizens against all these hostile forces, and if this requires certain nationalist economic policies, those policies are not to be condemned out of hand—although they should be subjected to the same cost-benefit critique as any other policy.

The question comes down to one of direction. In which direction is the transfer of power going: from top to bottom—which is where we want it to go, that is from cities to neighborhoods, neighborhoods to families—or bottom to top: from cities to states and states to the nation?

Nationalist policies that effectively transfer wealth and the power to make decisions from states, communities, and enterprises up to the federal level, no matter how well-intentioned, must be resisted. Wage and price controls, national economic planning, minority set-asides—these are socialism, whether they are advocated by Dick Gephardt or by a nationalist conservative. On the other hand, there are nationalist policies, some of them advocated by Sam Francis and Pat Buchanan, which transfer power from international government and transnational business back to the people and governments of the United States. This is a nationalism that opposes, for example, American soldiers being forced to serve under an alien flag, that opposes multilateral trade agreements that override

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our national, state, and local laws and punish American workers and small businessmen to benefit the global technocrats who fund the Democratic and Republican parties.

Finally, if men and women of the right are willing to walk some distance down the road with Gianfranco Fini and Pat Choate (and his spokesman Ross Perot), with Sir James Goldsmith and Pat Buchanan, they must also recognize the plain fact that national governments, up until very recently, have been the worst agents of oppression, working steadily not only to subjugate historical regional cultures in all parts of Italy, and in the American South and Midwest and West, but also to undermine churches and the moral and spiritual traditions they represent. The nation-state is useful as a shield—if only temporarily—against the international monsters and transnational viruses that threaten to destroy even the nations who created them in their laboratories. A reactionary's sympathies will always lie with the little communities who continue to defy the Jacobin state and with the movements like the Lega Nord and the Southern League that work for liberation.

These simple principles are not perfect or exhaustive. They are certainly not original. They are, in fact, implicit in much of what has been written and spoken by our friends over the past decade. They are the basis, I believe, of our common resistance to the Jacobin nightmare that has been tormenting the sleep of Western man since the French lawyers murdered Louis and Marie Antoinette, since Lincoln unleashed his jackals on the gallant South, since Roosevelt fought fascism abroad to impose it at home. The phrase belongs to Lawrence Dennis, something of a fascist himself, and they tried him for treason for merely uttering it. Someday, if we are really lucky, we shall prove ourselves so dangerous to this regime that they will declare us all to be criminals and outlaws.

"We must all hang together," said Ben Franklin to John Hancock, as they were signing the Declaration that could have proved to be their death warrant, "or most assuredly we shall all hang separately." It is time for people on the right to join together, to hang tough, even if it means at the end of a rope.

Los Perdidos De La Mesa Verde

by Alan Sullivan

Above the bluffs a golden eagle swerves,
Thermaling up Point Lookout's sandstone pale.
The access road ascends in whipsnake curves
Cut through the crumbly Mancos Valley shale.
With gates and tolls the commonwealth preserves
This wilderness where wolves no longer wail
Nor shamans savor jimson in the shade
Cast by a waterpocket's palisade.

Atop the mesa drivers park their cars
Where Anasazi farmers ditched the loess,
Though juniper and pinyon hide the scars
Impartially as weeds would repossess
Our own abandoned fields. What earthen jars
Will hold our dust? Whom will our works impress?
How reverently will antiquaries trace
The discards of our fabricating race?

We troop with tourists down the yucca track
To Spruce House where the black-eyed windows watch
As though the pueblo dwellers might come back,
Suing the state for title to this notch
With snowmelt welling from its mossy crack.
An urchin clambers up a pinyon's crotch,
Barking his shins on weather-beaten limbs
Which grew when braided sentries walked the rims.

Two centuries before Columbus sailed,
The Lost Ones quit these alcoves in the cliffs,
Leaving—before their kiva culture failed—
These charcoal prints and cryptic petroglyphs
Along the walls their plaited ladders scaled.
Whether they fled from locusts, hippogriffs
Or apparitions of a Passion Play,
No honest archeologist can say;

But love, these ruins make an atheist
Reflect upon the depth of Christian sin
And recognize behind the Eucharist,
The "gentle Anasazi" eating kin.
No scruples trouble their apologist
Who merely points out cistern, kiln and bin,
Never admitting what obsidian rites
Once stained this ledge on sacrificial nights.

Pensive, we mount the Temple of the Sun
Where horned lizards bask in the warmth of noon.
No camera shutters click; no children run;
But a bold towhee trills its fluent tune
Across the canyon's blue oblivion.
In solitude and silence we commune
With presences elusive as the bird,
Haunting the song, shunning the spoken word.

For here the Lost Ones' mystery abides—
A desperate gesture just before their Fall.
Unfinished, this immense foundation hides
Conceptions wider than its broken wall.
Mapping the firmament of spirit guides
Which we call stars, the shamans sought to stall
The ruin they foresaw—or somehow wrest
Salvation from the nemesis they blessed.

How shall we justify embraces now?
Without issue, whose future shall we serve—
Whose hand will guide the grindstone or the plow?
Around us, mute, the mortared courses curve
Over the mesa's furthest jutting brow.
Beyond, a Void none but the dead observe—
That Absolute where only Mind belongs—
Rings with the notes of unremembered songs.

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The GOP Flop

Why Dole and Kemp Lost

by Samuel Francis

Anna Mecek-Wodecki

As the Republican primaries drew to a finish last spring, the several pundits whom the Grand Old Party carries in its pockets began to sing the praises of the man who was emerging as the winner. Partisans of his rivals—Steve Forbes, Lamar Alexander, Phil Gramm, and others—started lining up to kiss hands and bend knees to the nominee, and by the time of the Republican National Convention in San Diego, there was hardly anyone who even remembered that there had been such things as primaries at all.

The cheerleading for Bob Dole reached a crescendo when he announced the selection of Jack Kemp as his running mate. In 1992, Mr. Kemp had left the convention as the front-runner for 1996, but various *contretemps* in the intervening four years had cast a pall over his chances. In company with William Bennett, Kemp had supported and campaigned for a California ballot measure for school choice, but their support accomplished little, and the measure failed. In 1994, both of them again campaigned against the same state's Proposition 187, ending welfare benefits for illegal immigrants, but again their help for the measure's foes accomplished nothing, and Proposition 187 passed by a substantial margin. By the beginning of 1995, Kemp's political prospects had dimmed considerably, and in addition to his blunders on the California issues, he had also taken other positions that alienated large numbers of conservative and Republican grassroots activists—his championing of NAFTA, for example, as well as his apparent indifference to such blistering social issues as abortion, special legal rights for homosexuals, and, by no means least, his vocal opposition to any effort to abolish or cut back affirmative action, including his opposition to California's Proposition 209. By early 1995, his star had dimmed to the point that Kemp announced he would not be a candidate for the presidency in 1996, and among other reasons he cited the difficulty he had experienced in raising funds among conservative high-rollers who did not share his eccentric enthusiasms for Martin Luther King, renewing a civil rights agenda, and the economic interests of the urban underclass. His announcement that he would not run was widely greeted as the termination of his political career.

And yet, when Bob Dole called Kemp to his boyhood home in Russell, Kansas, to announce his enthronement as his running mate, the pundits went wild with joy. Despite the dwindling of Kemp's prospects among funding sources and grassroots activists, his cadres inside the Beltway had never lost faith in him, and it was from that cadre that most pundits took their cues. Kemp's whole political ideology of what he calls "progressive conservatism" consists of government by, for, and of the policy-wonks—enterprise zones, public housing experiments, supply-side arcana, and spreading democracy abroad. All these projects imply a scale and scope of national government far larger than what most non-Beltway conservatives have ever envisioned or envision today, and all of them promise a virtually bottomless cornucopia of jobs and power-playing inside the belly of the federal beast. Moreover, nothing Kemp offers threatens the hegemony of liberalism and its premises of a federal government dedicated to the proposition that all people should be made equal, which is why the announcement of his nomination elicited praise from such stalwarts of the Beltway left as David Broder and, from the *Washington Post* editorial page, the comment, "The fact is that Jack Kemp stands for some of the best impulses in the Republican Party."

Yet the exuberance with which the Dole-Kemp ticket was greeted lasted no longer than the summer, and as the ticket failed to blip on the radar screens of the public opinion polls,

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the same pundits who had applauded at the time of San Diego were increasingly muted by October. More than one Beltway savant of the right assured me at that time that Dole would certainly lose, but it wasn't important anyway. What was really important was to keep the House and Senate, increase the Republican majority in 1998, and really go for the presidential jugular in 2000. By November, the court conservatives had forgotten all about their enthusiasm for Dole and Kemp in the summer, though even after the defeat of the ticket the Kemp diehards were still plotting how their hero could ascend to the White House the next time.

As far as I can tell, virtually no one—pundit, policy-wonk, activist, or fat cat—has asked himself how this could happen. How could it happen that a political party that won a majority of House and Senate seats two years earlier, challenging a President whose popularity ratings were at one point lower than those of Harry Truman at his nadir, whose administration and personal household were enveloped in financial and sexual scandals, whose close friends and associates had been forced to resign, charged with felony offenses, subjected to grand jury interrogation, and led away in chains to prison—how could the political party lose the presidential election? Dole's personality and age were the most convenient explanations, and they seem to have provided the excuse the Beltway right needs to avoid any serious reexamination of their ideology, policies, or campaign strategies, but the truth is that personality and age simply don't cut it. Mr. Dole's personality and age were the same in the fall of 1996 as they had been in the spring, when the Republicans chose him as their nominee, and if personality and age were going to undermine the Dole campaign, the party and its barons should have thought of them before they greeted his candidacy so enthusiastically in the summer.

The truth is that in picking Bob Dole and Jack Kemp, the Republican Party deserted what has been its real mainstream since the early 1970's, when Richard Nixon showed the Republicans how to win national elections. It is not that Nixon—let alone Gerald Ford, George Bush, or even Ronald Reagan—remained loyal to the promises of their campaign strategies, but that all of them followed much the same strategy and won the White House with it. In a word, they won the White House because they sought to mobilize the Middle American vote; Bob Dole and Jack Kemp lost the White House in 1996 (and George Bush lost in 1992) because they ignored the Middle American vote or failed to grasp how to appeal to it. The evidence for this lies in the exit polls of voters from every national election from 1972 to last year.

The category of "Middle American" is not simply a political catchword but a reasonably rigorous political and sociological category, at least as rigorous as any such category ever is. Middle Americans consist of middle-income, largely white, working- and middle-class voters. They tend to be distributed in suburbs and rural areas, to be churchgoers, and in the Northeast to be of European ethnic and Roman Catholic background. Variously described by Nixon as the "Silent Majority" or the "New American Majority," they also conform to what Ben Wattenberg and Richard Scammon called in 1970 the "Real Majority." What was then known as the "social issue"—mainly crime and the cultural radicalism of "permissiveness" manifested in films and television, the media and education—and is now known as the "culture war" are among their principal concerns as voters. So are affirmative action, which directly threatens their opportunities for upward economic and social mobility; immigration, which also jeopardizes their jobs as well as the safety and integrity of their communities; and, in particular, the economic erosion of their middle-class status and living standards since the 1970's, an erosion directly attributable to the globalization of the American economy and the prevalence of free trade policies. Middle American voters were the backbone of the Wallace movement and of the early New Right, before Beltway direct-mail czars discovered how to manipulate the more radically conservative Middle American impulses. But the Middle American voter is not a conservative in the sense of Barry Goldwater, and while Goldwater's quaint evocation of a classical liberal rugged individualism in 1964 only alienated and threatened working-class Middle Americans in Northeastern suburbs and ethnic neighborhoods, Wallace's commitment to preserve Middle American economic security through what are today sneeringly called "middle-class entitlements" (Social Security, Medicare, unemployment, health, and old-age benefits) won him their support. For Middle Americans, economic security issues trump cultural and social issues; as long as candidates do not threaten the former and champion the latter, they can win Middle American allegiances, but if a candidate is perceived as threatening economic security, no amount of thunder about crime, smut, abortion, and queers will save him.

In the case of both Bob Dole and Jack Kemp, there was never much of a chance that they would or could win Middle Americans. Dole's acceptance speech at the convention tried to play with what he took to be Middle American themes, but he failed to muster the anger and the sense of injustice that animates those whose votes are actually driven by them. Throughout the campaign, Dole failed to express or develop any vision of an America that would be returned to Middle American hegemony. His proposals for tax cuts, by which taxes would be reduced by 15 percent but middle-class entitlements would remain intact and defense spending be vastly increased, were simply never believable except to the Beltway policy-wonks who convinced only themselves. His World War II record and his promises of a renewed war on drugs fell flat and exposed the hollowness of his grasp of what really matters to Middle Americans caught in a war over their own children, their jobs, their communities, and their futures. It is true that toward the end of the campaign both candidates concentrated on California and beat the drum on illegal (but not legal) immigration and affirmative action, with Kemp actually reversing his earlier opposition to Proposition 209 and now vowing his opposition to affirmative action. It was simply too little too late, and no one motivated by these issues could take what the candidates said seriously. Nor did either of them understand how to use the social and cultural issues; they were visibly embarrassed by them and avoided them as much as possible.

Indeed, Kemp, at last unleashed before a national spotlight, soon began making declarations that sounded as though they had been scripted by the sworn enemies of Middle America; and given the influence of Empower America, the neoconservative Beltway think tank where Kemp, Steve Forbes, and William Bennett stashed themselves between 1992 and 1996, on the Dole-Kemp campaign, they probably were. Campaigning in East Los Angeles and Harlem, Kemp hailed not only his favorite heroes, Martin Luther King and Abraham Lincoln, but also Nelson Mandela, and threw in a good word for Louis Farrakhan as well. As for the "Southern strategy" by which Republican presidential candidates from Nixon to Reagan

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had sought to pull a once solidly Democratic South into the Republican column, Kemp explicitly repudiated it. "All too often in the past," he told the *Boston Globe* in September, "we've had that Southern strategy that said we want to go after the white vote, and had better not try to get black votes because it might lose white votes. That is shameful. Shameful." Kemp did not want merely to attract more blacks to the party but to forge them into the base of the party. Speaking of the Northern black urban voting bloc, he said, "It's not the Republican base, but it should be."

No one could quarrel with Kemp's desire to bring more blacks into the party, but he never seems to grasp that, to accomplish this goal, the party would have to abandon a number of issues and policies that have enabled it to win both Southern whites and Northern working-class voters over the last two decades. In saying explicitly that the Southern strategy was "shameful," a moral as well as a political error, Kemp (and his party) were openly turning against the very voting groups that have put Republicans in office from the days of Nixon to those of Newt Gingrich.

As for Dole, he immediately renounced his own party's plank on immigration and seldom if ever referred to abortion again after the primaries. Given the salience of those issues to rank-and-file Middle American Republican voters—of immigration in California and several border states of the West, and of abortion to the "religious right" that today makes up about a third of Republican voting strength—it was clear that the nominee either misunderstood the very voters to whom he was appealing or was deliberately seeking to move the party in a radically different direction. On affirmative action, while Dole as a senator had sponsored a bill to abolish it at the federal level, he distanced himself from the bill in his latter days as Majority Leader and failed to make it an issue except in the last desperate weeks of the presidential campaign in California.

As noted, the November exit polls show that the Dole-Kemp ticket lost key national constituencies that Republicans—even losers like Gerald Ford—had carried from 1972 through 1988. Indeed, the latter year, when George Bush's campaign presented itself as the natural heir to Ronald Reagan and Lee Atwater brought immortality to Willie Horton, was the last in which the Middle Americans rallied to the Republican banner. By 1992, with Atwater dead and the Bush campaign run by professional Republicans and Beltway courtiers, Middle Americans were deserting, first to Pat Buchanan in the early primaries, then to Ross Perot in the general election. The same trend was apparent in 1996, though Perot proved to be a spent force, and President Clinton in both campaigns was careful to present himself as the champion of the beleaguered middle class and an enemy of crime. Clinton too failed to mobilize the passions that animate the Middle American soul, but the image he and his spinners designed at least avoided doing or saying much to alienate such souls and drive them to Dole or Perot. It is all very well to say that Perot in both 1992 and 1996 took votes from Bush and Dole and that the Texan's campaign was a major reason for their defeat, but the point is that neither Perot nor any other third party candidate could have harmed them had they retained the confidence of the Middle American constituencies.

The exit polls of 1996 can be compared to what, for the purposes of this article, I will call the "NFR average," the average vote won by Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, and Ronald Reagan in the presidential elections of 1972, 1976, and 1980 and 1984, in certain poll categories that are sociologically associated with Middle Americans—racial, ideological, regional, religious, income, and size of place. The same comparison can also be constructed for 1988, the last year of Middle American GOP loyalty, and 1996. What these comparisons show is that the Bush, Dole, and Kemp camps are steadily losing the base vote of the Republican Party and are leading the party toward eventual political suicide at the national level. (The exit poll statistics can be found in the *New York Times* of November 10, 1996.)

Thus, while Jack Kemp may regard Republican appeals to white voters as "shameful," white voters supported Nixon, Ford, and Reagan (the NFR average) from 1972 through 1984 as well as George Bush in 1988 by more than 59 percent. But whites supported the Bush of 1992 and the Dole of 1996 by only 40 and 46 percent respectively. Whites in the South supported Nixon, Ford, and Reagan by a whopping 65 percent and Bush in 1988 by an even larger 67 percent, but in 1996 white Southern support for Dole had dropped to 56 percent, up from Bush's even worse showing of 49 percent in 1992. (Nor was the presence of a white Southerner on the Democratic ticket an adequate explanation; Clinton in 1992 and 1996 won only 34 and 36 percent of the white Southerner vote, only marginally better than Dukakis's 32 percent in 1988.) Nationally, white men went for Nixon, Ford, and Reagan by more than 60 percent and Bush in 1988 by 63 percent, but only a pitiful 40 percent went for Bush in 1992 and 49 percent for Dole in 1996.

Ideologically, those voters who identify themselves as "conservatives" were also zealous for Republican presidential candidates from the 1970's through the 1980's. The NFR average from 1972 through 1984 was more than 74 percent. But Bush in 1992 received only 64 percent of the "conservative" vote, the lowest in recent history, while Dole was able to pull it up to 71 percent. Since virtually no self-described conservative was going to vote for Clinton and only a handful of eccentrics for Perot, and since Jack Kemp continued to enjoy a favorable press in most conservative media, Dole was able to keep pace with his Republican predecessors, but not at quite the same level.

Regionally, both Bush in 1992 and Dole last year lost significant support in key Republican strongholds, the South and the West (Dole actually lost Arizona, which had not gone Democratic in a presidential election since 1948, as well as California, even though the state is the birthplace of Jack Kemp). From 1972 through 1984, the NFR average for the South and the West was 57 percent and 55 percent respectively, and for Bush in 1988 it was 58 and 52 percent. In 1992 Bush won 43 percent of the Southern vote and only 24 percent of the Western, while in 1996 Dole performed only marginally better in the South with 46 percent and considerably better in the West (but 15 points behind his predecessors of the 1970's and 1980's) at 40 percent.

The same pattern is clear in categories of religious identification. Among both white Protestants and Roman Catholics, Nixon, Ford, and Reagan gained some of their strongest support. The NFR average for white Protestants is 67 percent and for Catholics 50 percent from 1972 through 1984. Bush in 1988 won 66 percent of the white Protestant vote and 52 percent of the Catholics but in 1992 took a mere 47 percent of white Protestants and a measly 35 percent of Catholics, while in 1996 Dole and Kemp managed to capture 53 percent of white Protestants and only slightly improved their standing with Catholics at 37 percent. Incidentally, Kemp's militant loyalty

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to Zionism failed to draw Jewish voters to the ticket; Jews voted for Dole-Kemp by a mere 16 percent, a far cry from the third of the Jewish vote consistently won by Nixon, Ford, Reagan, and Bush through 1988.

Two of the most typically Middle American categories are those for family income and the size of the place where the voter lives. The same pattern of Middle American erosion is evident in them too. As for middle-income groups, with incomes from "15,000 to above 50,000" dollars a year, the NFR average for 1976 (figures for 1972 are not available) through 1984 is 57 percent, while for Bush in 1988 it was still nearly 56 percent. But in 1992 Bush took only 39 percent of these middle-income categories, while in 1996 Dole and Kemp, despite all their chatter of tax-cuts and perhaps because of their chatter about the interests of the urban underclass, won only 41 percent, recapturing a mere two percent of the middle class. In the lower portions of the middle-income categories, Bush in 1992 and Dole in 1996 won percentages in the upper thirties, in contrast to the more than 50 percent consistently won by earlier Republican candidates.

And the same decline of Middle American support for Republicans is apparent in size of place. Nixon, Ford, and Reagan carried more than 60 percent of suburban and rural voters from 1972 through 1984, and Bush in 1988 carried them in the high fifties. Bush in 1992 took only 39 percent of the suburban and 42 percent of the rural voters, however, while in 1996 Dole and Kemp carried only 42 and 46 percent respectively.

Since Richard Nixon and his campaign technicians designed the Southern Strategy and similar appeals to the Wallace voters and other Middle American categories, the Republican Party appeared to be on the verge of inaugurating a genuine political revolution in the United States, not only in terms of electoral realignment but also in terms of the eventual content of public policy and legislation. Even when Republican Presidents betrayed their Middle American commitments (as they often did more than they lived up to them), the influence of a social force outside the liberal elites of Manhattan and the Beltway could never be ignored and at least had to be stroked and courted. If the Republicans did ignore or betray those forces, they could expect another Wallace-like movement that would eat into their votes and threaten to throw elections to the Democrats. While Nixon did not hesitate to steal Wallace's issues, he and his successors knew that the possibility of a Middle American revolt constituted a standing check on both their own party and that of their major rivals.

The Democrats have learned something since the 1970's; they no longer nominate candidates like George McGovern, and the Bill Clintons and Al Gores have figured out how to pursue their essentially McGovernite agenda in the guise of patriotism and family values. The Republicans can no longer count on the Democrats to commit suicide for them. What is worse, the Republican Party today is not the same as the GOP that nominated Nixon and his successors. The emergence of the Beltway conservative (really neoconservative) intelligentsia in the late 1970's and 80's created an elite group that now exerts immense influence on Republican policymaking, legislation, speechwriting, and electoral strategies, and that group has little connection to or sympathy for Middle Americans and their concerns. Groups like Empower America and its sisters in the think tanks and magazines of Washington now play major roles in determining what the party and its leaders think, read, hear, say, and do, as well as on whom they appoint, elect, and nominate. By 1992, this apparat had developed sufficient power within the party to prevent George Bush from connecting to the Middle Americans who are the real once and future base of the Republican Party if it is to have a future, and by 1996 the same apparat shaped the nomination and presidential campaigns of two of its own Beltway brothers, Bob Dole and Jack Kemp. The alienation of their ticket from the party's Middle American base is the reason they lost the election, and deserved to lose the election, against an opponent who should have been more vulnerable than any other since George McGovern himself. If the Democrats keep learning and the Republicans keep failing to distance themselves from the Beltway right and to return to their core support in the Middle American heartland that gave them the White House for most of the 1970's and 80's, the party can expect to keep losing in the future.

Krummholz

by Alan Sullivan

Hunched like an anchorite behind its boulder,
A treeline pine weathers the winter storms.
Its knotty branches shrink as nights turn colder.
Caught in its tufts, a fluted snowdrift forms.

When summer bares the mossy flanks of bosses
And lakes of lupine bloom on alpine meads,
The stunted pine regrows its winter losses,
Cracking the rocks to meet its meager needs.

Under its boughs the mantled squirrels nibble
On tender forage plucked from fields of sedge.
Below its roots the braids of snowmelt dribble
In purling pools from ledge to jointed ledge.

Off-trail two hikers hunker in its cranny
For shelter from the wind-bedeviled sky.
At dusk the twisted *krummholz* looks uncanny,
Its limbs outstretched as though to prophesy.

Driving our tentstakes deep in prickly humus,
We pitch our camp and gather sticks to burn.
The resin-scented plumes of smoke perfume us
While overhead the Bear and Draco turn.

As embers fade, our tangled limbs keep burning,
A blaze no dozing squirrels smell or see
Though tufted ears might hear us turning, turning.
O! Crooked love beneath the crooked tree.

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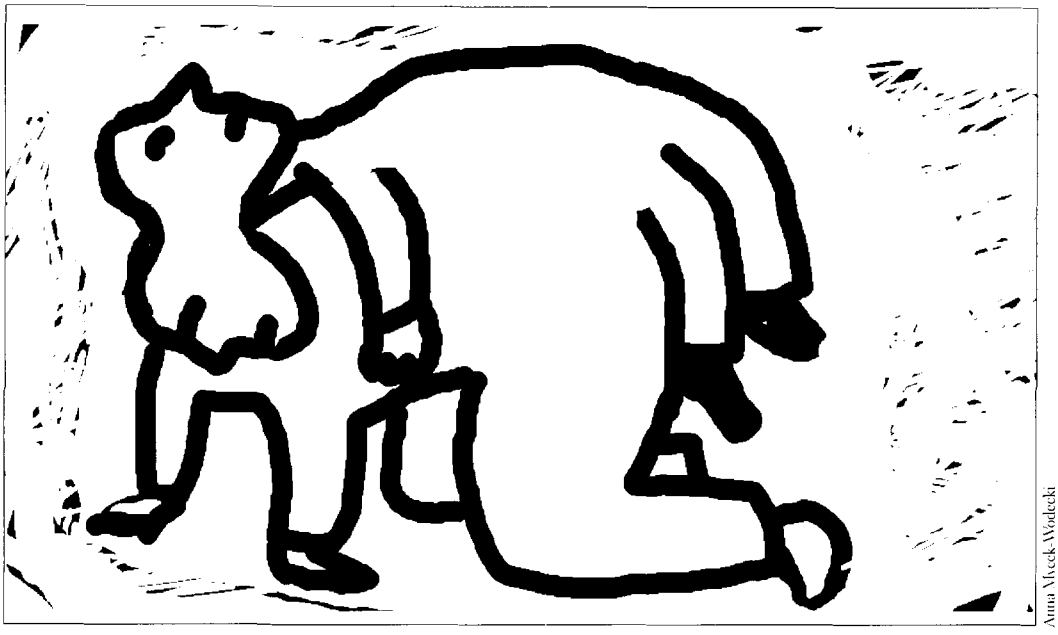
The Paleoconservative Imagination

by Mark Royden Winchell



Anna Mecek-Wodecki

In January 1996, Norman Podhoretz delivered a self-congratulatory eulogy for neoconservatism in a lecture before the American Enterprise Institute. In addition to giving himself and his cohorts credit for the recent successes of the American right, Podhoretz boasted that "thanks to the influence of neoconservatism on the conservative movement in general, the philistine indifference to culture which once pervaded that movement is largely gone." Mark C. Henrie of Toronto felt compelled to challenge this preposterous claim when Podhoretz's lecture was printed in *Commentary* later that year. In a letter published in the June 1996 issue of *Commentary*, Henrie points out that Russell Kirk was stressing the importance of culture as far back as the 1950's (a time when the founding fathers of neoconservatism were still on the anti-Stalinist left). Whatever else one might say about Kirk, he and the paleoconservatives associated with him could hardly be accused of "a philistine indifference to culture."

In responding to this letter, Podhoretz concedes that Henrie has a point. He believes, however, that the paleoconservatives "committed a greater sin" than indifference in "being ranged on the wrong side of the culture wars that reached fever pitch in the 60's and are still raging today." He even sees "an ironic confluence" between the paleoconservatives and the counterculture of the radical left. "Like T.S. Eliot and the Southern Agrarians by whom they were heavily influenced, the paleoconservatives despised capitalism, industrialism, and bourgeois democracy no less fervently than did the radicals of the counterculture." In making this linkage, Podhoretz is assuming that people with common enemies must necessarily be alike. (By the same logic, one might argue that there was no difference between Franklin Roosevelt's America and Joseph Stalin's Russia, simply because both nations fought Hitler's Germany.) Nevertheless, Podhoretz is certainly correct in acknowledging that paleoconservative attitudes toward culture are fundamentally different from those that one might find in the pages of *Commentary* or the *New Criterion*. The conservative "movement" is as divided on matters of culture as it is on foreign policy, trade, and states' rights.

As Podhoretz indicates, paleoconservative criticism has been influenced most significantly by the Christian humanism of T.S. Eliot and the anti-industrialism of the Nashville Agrarians. The implications of this inheritance become apparent when one contrasts the vision of Russell Kirk and such neo-Agrarian critics as Walter Sullivan and M.E. Bradford with the neoconservative criticism best exemplified by Podhoretz himself.

In an age when left-wing critics sought to make literature more political, Russell Kirk sought to make politics more literary. In the climactic section of his classic study *The Conservative Mind* (1953), he wrote: "Not to the statistician, then, but to the poet, do conservatives turn for insight. If there has been a principal conservative thinker in the twentieth century, it is T.S. Eliot, whose age this is in humane letters. Eliot's whole endeavor was to point a way out of the Wasteland toward order in the soul and in society." (Nearly two decades later, Kirk published *Eliot and His Age: T.S. Eliot's Moral Imagination in the Twentieth Century*, which is easily the best book ever written on Eliot as social thinker.) In placing less emphasis on transitory electoral victories than on the "permanent things," Kirk often quoted the following passage from Eliot's essay on F.H. Bradley: "If we take the widest and wisest view of a Cause, there is no such thing as a Lost Cause, because there is no such thing as a Gained Cause. We fight for lost causes because we know that our defeat and dismay may be the preface to our successors' victory, though that victory itself will be temporary; we fight rather to keep something alive than in the expectation

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that it will triumph."

Although he does not discuss the Nashville Agrarians or the British Distributists in *The Conservative Mind*, these were two "lost causes" for which Kirk felt a particular fondness. A year and a half before his death, he delivered a lecture entitled "Men of Letters as Renewers of Society" at a symposium honoring these two groups. Despite the different cultural backgrounds from which the Agrarians and Distributists emerged, both movements shared a reactionary, anti-industrial bias. The Agrarians celebrated the culture of the Old South and advocated subsistence farming as a solution to the social and economic ills plaguing the South during the Great Depression. Distributism was a land reform movement launched in England by the Catholic writers G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc. Like the Agrarians, the Distributists deeply distrusted modernity and longed for the restoration of a predominantly rural society. Both the Agrarians and Distributists believed that the widespread, decentralized ownership of property would have a conservative influence on society by giving the vast majority of people a tangible stake in the communities where they lived. To define the situation in indigenously American terms, the industrialists were children of Alexander Hamilton, while the Distributists and Agrarians were the sort of yeoman farmers who formed the backbone of a Jeffersonian society.

Whether or not the specific policies advocated by the Agrarians and the Distributists would have had the desired effect, their predictions about the future of an industrialized society have proved chillingly prescient. Surveying American life from the perspective of 1992, Kirk observed:

> Our great cities, a hundred Long Streets, are nearly ruined, ravaged by crime, their population corrupted or endangered by deadly narcotics, all community destroyed. Our boasted affluence is given the lie by the swift and sinister growth of a genuine proletariat, voracious and unruly, subsisting at public expense. . . . Our air is polluted badly, our countryside uglified, public taste corrupted. . . . While we talk windily still of free enterprise, the industrial and commercial conglomerates move toward oligopoly on tremendous scale. Religious belief and observance have been first reduced to the ethos of sociability, and then to ignorant discourses on revolution. Leviathan, the monstrous society, has swallowed his myriads.

Neoconservatives, along with other members of the Reagan coalition, might well have been disturbed by Kirk's remarks. For one thing, he was describing American society *after* conservative Republicans had been in the White House for nearly 12 years. When Reagan ran for reelection in 1984, his campaign declared it to be "Morning in America," and when George Bush argued for the moral equivalent of a third Reagan term in 1988, his theme was "Stay the Course." Kirk's point is not that the country would have been in better shape under Walter Mondale or Michael Dukakis, but that even the most enlightened politicians are limited in their ability to improve society. As humbling as it might be, most intellectually honest politicians would concede as much. What would have given neoconservatives and other Reaganites much greater difficulty was Kirk's skepticism about the blessings of technology and economic growth. Like the Agrarians and Distributists before him, Kirk was an "environmental extremist" who lacked the proper respect for unfettered commerce.

The attitudes Kirk expressed were ones that Norman Podhoretz would almost certainly identify with the "adversary culture." In his book *The Bloody Crossroads*, Podhoretz notes that "the very act of becoming an intellectual or an artist in America [has come] to mean that one was in effect joining the party of opposition—placing oneself (to use the term made famous by Lionel Trilling in *Beyond Culture*) in an 'adversary' relation to the business civilization and all its works." Although such an attitude had roots in the Christian ethic, Podhoretz contends that it was almost wholly appropriated by the nihilistic left in the 1960's. The only anti-industrial sentiment he acknowledges on the right emerged in Europe in the form of "fascism and of literally reactionary political movements which advocated the restoration of monarchy or of an essentially feudal social organization." Completely ignoring the Southern Agrarian tradition that he would later condemn, Podhoretz writes that "nothing really comparable materialized in the United States, possibly because this country had no feudal past."

The differences between Podhoretz and Kirk are perhaps clearest when one considers their respective discussions of Henry Adams. In *The Bloody Crossroads*, Podhoretz depicts Adams as a tiresome poseur who had a baneful influence on American culture. His intellectual autobiography, *The Education of Henry Adams*, is the continuous, interminable whine of an 18th-century man tragically unfit for a world hurtling toward the 20th century. Although there was much that deserved criticism in the Gilded Age, Adams was petulantly blind to his culture's genuine achievements in literature, philosophy, and the arts. As a result, his historical research, particularly into the life of the Middle Ages, seems like nothing so much as a form of escapism, the work of a highbrow Miniver Cheevy. Although he complained of powerlessness in his own time, Adams's writing has remained a force in ours, "when the names of Rutherford B. Hayes or Chester Arthur are scarcely remembered." We should not, however, take this to "mean that Adams is a force for good." "On the contrary," Podhoretz concludes, "in encouraging a bigoted contempt for this country and in subtly denigrating and devaluing the life of the mind, he has asserted so malignant an influence that . . . I see little of value that would be lost by allowing him to slip into the obscurity he so often boasted of wishing to achieve."

In *The Conservative Mind*, written four decades before Podhoretz's essay, Russell Kirk readily admits that Henry Adams is easy to dislike. His conceit and censoriousness make him "the most irritating person in American letters." But he is also "the most provocative writer, and the best historian, and one of the most penetrating critics of ideas" that this country has ever produced. Kirk shares Adams's disdain for the greed and technological hubris of American life during the latter part of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th. Kirk believes, however, that Adams's pervasive gloom was due more to his secularism than to objective conditions in society. A convert to Roman Catholicism, Kirk makes his case in terms one cannot imagine Norman Podhoretz accepting. "Christian orthodoxy," Kirk writes, "believes in an eternity which, as it is superhuman, is supra-terrestrial; and the real world being a world of spirit, man's fate is not dependent upon the vicissitudes of this planet, but may be translated by divine purpose into a realm apart from our present world of space and time. In this certitude, Christians escape from the problem of degradation of energy;

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but Adams, however much he might revere the Virgin of Chartres as incarnation of the idea and as symbol of eternal beauty, could not put credence in the idea of Providence."

If Russell Kirk wrote with a Christian Agrarian bias, the same is even more true of Walter Sullivan. Born in Nashville in 1924, Sullivan has spent almost his entire adult life at Vanderbilt University. After receiving his B.A. from Vanderbilt and earning his M.F.A. from Iowa State University, he returned to his alma mater to teach in 1949. He was first a student and later a colleague of Donald Davidson. He knew most of the Fugitives and Agrarians personally and was a particularly good friend of both Allen Tate and Robert Penn Warren. Sullivan's commitment to the Agrarian vision is evident in his first two novels and in the considerable amount of commentary he has written on Southern literature. What is most significant about his point of view, however, are the grounds on which he criticizes Agrarianism and every other secular faith. As much as he values the Southern myth and the great literature it produced, Sullivan believes that this myth was bound to fail because, for all its appeal, it was finally a gnostic heresy. Protestant Christianity was an essential part of the culture of the Old South, but as a force shaping the lives of men it became increasingly subordinated to the secular authority of family, community, and tradition.

For the past three decades, Sullivan has persistently opposed the secularization of culture, particularly literary culture. In doing so, he has been willing to take on friend as well as foe. In a Phi Beta Kappa lecture delivered at Vanderbilt in November 1989, he observed that his fellow Southern "New Critics" (many of them Agrarians) sometimes gave the impression of valuing art only for art's sake. Such a valuation runs counter to the Augustinian notion that art, like all things, exists for the glory of God. In medieval times, the sacred dimension of art was obvious because most art was religious in nature. With the Renaissance, however, art entered the secular world and beauty became its own excuse for being. By the time of the Enlightenment, Deistic conceptions of God had made the divine so transcendent that an immediate sense of the sacred had largely vanished from culture. If anything, the Romantic movement made matters worse by creating "a God . . . not transcendent at all, but so absolutely immanent that he existed everywhere, a god of and in all of nature." As a consequence, even objects of religious art—crucifixes, holy statues, cathedrals—came to be viewed primarily for their beauty, and the museum became the new church of our culture.

"The process that I have sketched here developed over hundreds of years," Sullivan contends, "but it seems to me that it reached a climax in my lifetime. By the middle of this century, Nietzsche had proclaimed the death of God, Joyce had put the artist on the throne from which God had been evicted, and the new critics had developed a system of judging literature that did not accommodate moral or metaphysical considerations." If the New Critics were part of the problem, it is because they had been content to live on the spiritual capital of centuries without realizing the seriousness of the threat posed to Western civilization by the radical relativism of recent cultural theories. (The title of Sullivan's talk is "Confessions of an Old New Critic.") Ironically, the deconstructionists have now deposed the artist from the throne where Joyce had placed him. If there is any hierarchy left at all, the critic as guru or mystifier reigns supreme.

Sullivan's refusal to build a wall of separation between his literary and religious judgments is the characteristic that most differentiates him from the neoconservative critics. That neoconservative criticism should be so secular is certainly ironic when one considers that the single greatest literary hero of neoconservatives (and perhaps of paleoconservatives, as well) is the uncompromisingly religious Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. An ardent Russian Orthodox Christian, Solzhenitsyn harbors a precapitalist view of society that would make *I'll Take My Stand* look like a moderate document by comparison. The tendency among Western intellectuals has been to admire Solzhenitsyn's courageous battle against Soviet tyranny while condescending to the very beliefs that made that battle possible.

To his credit, Norman Podhoretz does not take such an easy way out. Instead, he argues in *The Bloody Crossroads* that "whether or not one believes in God, and whether or not one believes that Solzhenitsyn is an instrument of the divine will, *his* belief has produced those 'clear effects' to which William James pointed as the 'pragmatic' test of a genuine religious experience." Podhoretz even concedes that the Russian novelist achieves a kind of superhuman selflessness in *The Gulag Archipelago*, where he finds his prophetic vocation by becoming a vessel for powers beyond the mere craft of writing. But Podhoretz fails to take what religious conservatives would regard as the next crucial step. As impressed as he may be with the effects of Solzhenitsyn's faith, Podhoretz is finally unwilling to see it as an end in itself, much less the chief end of life. It is this desire to enjoy the fruits of religion without embracing its roots that Eliot found most objectionable in the neohumanism of his old professor Irving Babbitt. Walter Sullivan makes much the same criticism of his Agrarian ally Richard Weaver. Such medieval Catholic moralism (Anglican in Eliot's case, Roman in Sullivan's) marks the extreme end of the paleoconservative spectrum.

Of all the critics on the Old Right, the one who most infuriated neoconservatives was M.E. Bradford. Born in Fort Worth, Texas, in 1934, Bradford was ten years younger than Walter Sullivan and 16 years younger than Russell Kirk. In 1968, he took his Ph.D. at Vanderbilt, where he had studied under Sullivan, Donald Davidson, and Thomas Daniel Young. During a career of a quarter century that ended with his death in the spring of 1993, Bradford made substantial contributions to the fields of rhetoric, constitutional law, and political theory. He was a Burkean traditionalist and a fervent disciple of Richard Weaver (who has been called the Saint Paul of the Vanderbilt Agrarians, too young to have been one of the original 12 but the most effective evangelist for their position). A states' rights Southerner, Bradford supported George Wallace for President and had the temerity to suggest that the downfall of the American Republic began with Abraham Lincoln's efforts to save it. If being a conservative means preserving the status quo, Bradford was proud to call himself a reactionary. What was needed was a willingness to turn back the clock. Unfortunately, the neoconservatives would turn it back no farther than the Cold War 50's. Bradford would have gone them at least a century better.

When word got around Washington in 1981 that the new President was likely to name Bradford to be head of the National Endowment for the Humanities, a coalition of Republican "moderates" and neoconservatives (including Norman Podhoretz) organized to oppose his appointment. The anti-Bradford camp closed ranks around a thoroughly respectable neoconservative Democrat, the Brooklyn native William Ben-

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nett, who was then director of the National Humanities Center in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. After a campaign that included egregious misrepresentations of Bradford's character and views, the Bennett forces emerged victorious, and their candidate went on to become a major figure in American politics. More than any other single confrontation, that battle helped to embitter relations between neoconservatives and the Old Right.

Despite his distinction in a variety of fields, Mel Bradford was first and foremost a literary critic. As one might expect, he wrote often and well about the literature of the American South. He was probably the world's foremost authority on Faulkner's short fiction, and, at the time of his death, he was writing a biography of his old mentor Donald Davidson. But Bradford's Agrarian vision had more than a mere regional application. In fact, as a native of Texas and a graduate of the University of Oklahoma, he was Western as well as Southern. Under his trademark Stetson hat, Bradford's Agrarian vision of social order was leavened by the libertarian spirit of the cowboy. He stressed the cultural importance of art precisely because he distrusted the concept of a telocratic government. To the extent possible, civic virtue should be the product of customs, mores, and traditions, rather than the police power of the state. By encouraging cultural institutions to serve this vital function, the critic helps remove from government a burden that government is ontologically unsuited to carry.

In his essay "Artists at Home: Frost and Faulkner," Bradford directly challenges the Northeastern literary establishment to which most neoconservative critics belong. Speaking of the Manhattan provincials, he writes: "By and large, they address only one another. Concerning the rest of the republic, they have only conventional responses proceeding not from reflection but from fear, ignorance, and animosity. That this other America, in all its antique multiplicity, should foster or possess serious literature is for them a contradiction in terms." Although Bradford's primary target here is Lionel Trilling, particularly in his attempt to turn Frost into a poet of Sophoclean terror, he also mentions the critiques of Faulkner by Irving Howe, Alfred Kazin, and Norman Podhoretz. Without mentioning neoconservatism by name, Bradford tars all the New York intellectuals with the same brush. Against the image of the alienated rebel, Bradford offers "an alternate model of the poet: as *vates* or memory-keeper, craftsman and vessel of prescription; as bard or *scop* who in the operation of his imagination assumes the fundamental legitimacy of his society."

As firm as Bradford was in his principles, he did not see literary criticism as a vehicle for settling personal scores. His essay "The Vocation of Norman Podhoretz"—actually an extended review of *The Bloody Crossroads*—pays generous tribute to a neoconservative adversary, whom Bradford considered a brilliant critic and fellow warrior against totalitarianism. In fact, after reading Bradford on Podhoretz, one might conclude that the differences between paleoconservatives and neoconservatives have been greatly exaggerated. (Bradford even dislikes Henry Adams.) However, in two places Bradford establishes a crucial distance between himself and Podhoretz.

First, he calls Podhoretz's essay on *The God That Failed* anachronistic. Bradford argues that this book's account of disillusionment with communism holds little interest for "those of us whose early education was not shaped by a passionate and monolithic commitment to the Left, whose friends, teachers and families never succumbed to the charms of an alien ideology or followed Stephen Dedalus in rejecting nation, kindred, and church." Bradford reminds us that, in addition to studying under Lionel Trilling at Columbia and F.R. Leavis at Cambridge, Podhoretz had once been a student at the Jewish Theological Seminary. One can detect in his anticommunism a transferred sense of religious fervor and vocation.

Later in his essay, Bradford contends that "there is some myopia implicit in the neoconservative critique of the counterculture—myopia with respect to literary and cultural history." Although Podhoretz sometimes seems to suggest that opposition to the adversary culture comes only from "bourgeois" sources, Bradford reminds us that "the most devastating critique of alienation *qua* crusade issues . . . from pre-capitalist roots." After all, "most of our forefathers sought out the New World not to start a business but to acquire land and the status of freeholder: from pieties which are recognized even in New York as different." It is for attitudes such as these that Norman Podhoretz finds Mel Bradford and Russell Kirk indistinguishable from the flower children of Haight-Ashbury.

What binds the neoconservative and paleoconservative critics together is a sensible collection of shared antipathies. Unfortunately, readers of *Commentary* and the *New Criterion* might conclude that the neoconservatives often have little to offer *but* antipathy (what Sanford Pinsker once called "revisionism with rancor"). At times, it seems that the neoconservatives are guilty of an urbane parochialism that results in the endless trashing of a fashionable canon of writers, who are taken to represent the entirety of contemporary literature. Because the paleoconservatives tend to be more aware of culture in the provinces (especially below the Mason-Dixon Line), they are more apt to detect signs of health in our life and literature. Moreover, they realize that it is not enough to leave the Finland Station if one does not also seek the Heavenly City. c

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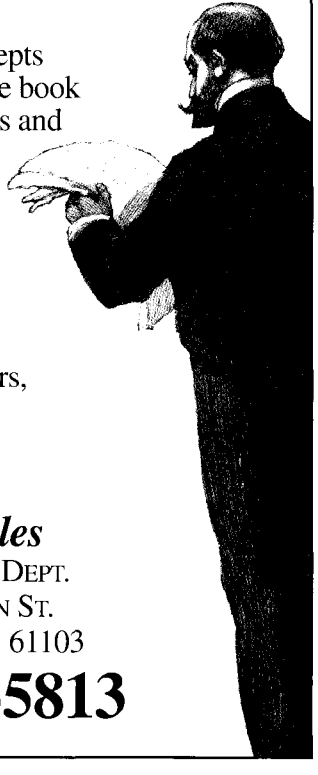

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Conservatives and the Free Market

by George Watson

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

When everyone "hastens through by-paths to private profit," Samuel Johnson remarked confidently in 1756, "no great change can suddenly be made." So the market can be conservative in its effects. The notion is startling, especially from the pen of an 18th-century Tory, and it hardly matters for the moment whether the market Johnson had in mind was regulated or free. It is startling because, in much of Europe, conservatives were consistently suspicious of private enterprise long before socialism became a party of state, and for good reason. A conservative gentry is unlikely to welcome entrepreneurs who try to break into a social elite or who, with new enterprises like factories and mines, recklessly put wages up. Oddly enough, however, conservatives have recently turned back to something like Johnson's position, as if it were the most natural thing in the world to think the market socially conservative. Such claims may still look a bit implausible. But in the confident years of the New Right in Europe and America since the mid-1970's, that hardly mattered. If enough people think private enterprise is conservative, then conservative is what it will be taken to be. Or so runs the wisdom of the age. The meaning of a word is its use.

Conservative competition, for all that, remains a paradox to any thoughtful observer, and the paradox is doubled if, in a series of developments Johnson did not live to see, the market is freed of tariffs and the economy turns global in scale. Nothing, and certainly not socialism, challenges old capital more threateningly than new capital; nothing endangers established interests more than the vulgar new entrepreneur with a clever idea, a bank loan, and an eye for the quick buck. That is how old fortunes are destroyed. Socialism was no such threat, in its day. Capitalists could enrich themselves out of communism, and did; in his autobiography *Hammer: Witness to History* (1987), Armand Hammer, whose father Julius once helped to found the American Communist Party, told how Lenin, soon after he seized power in Russia, guaranteed him monopoly rights and a strike-free workforce—something no democratic government on earth can offer a budding capitalist. Lenin's ideas sound pretty conservative, by now, and after his death in 1924 the Soviet system he created became one of the most rigid and backward-looking societies of modern history, ruled by an elite whose lives were eased by country villas, boxes at the opera, chauffeured limousines, and even (as North Korea has recently illustrated) a hereditary succession for the head of state. In economies like that, where inflation was often negligible and strikes rigorously banned, capitalists could make merry and did. In fact, a cynic surveying the Soviet system that collapsed in 1989 might be inclined to wonder why conservatives in the West were so unfriendly to it. The best answer, perhaps, and the kindliest, is that democratic conservatives are democrats as well as conservatives. At all events, and for whatever reasons, they embraced protectionist private enterprise between the two world wars, both in Europe and the United States, and in the mid-1970's the free market. Which leaves one wondering where in the world the true conservatives are now.

In his casual aside about private profit as a guarantee against large and sudden change, Johnson might be thought to have answered just that, though I have not seen his remark quoted in recent years in the writings of the New Conservatives on either side of the Atlantic, whether Reaganites or Thatcherites. One of Johnson's sources, in a general sort of way, was John Locke, who is not usually thought of as a conservative. But he had once made a conservative case for elective systems, and in his famous essay of 1690, which Johnson often quotes in his dictionary, he had dared to defend the essential conservatism of free elections. Democracy was still a century and more down the track, but Locke's argument in his 19th chapter might be said to anticipate the conservatism of the democratic idea. To the familiar objection that it would be ruinous to "lay the foundation of government in the unstable opinion and uncertain humour of the people," he wrote, in a work published a year after the English Revolution of 1689, there is a simple and reassuring answer. "People are not so easily got out of their old forms as some are apt to suggest," wrote Locke, urging a renewed loyalty to ancient constitutions. It is an argument that finds a sym-

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pathetic echo in an age that survived Hitler and Stalin. Tyranny is naturally radical, Locke argues, and popular government is nothing to be afraid of. By and large, and in comparison with other systems, it is conservative.

Modern conservatives have usually been uninterested in sources such as these. Anyone who asks his conservative friends, as I sometimes do, to explain what is conservative about a competitive free market, for example, is likely to get a blank stare followed by an answer to another question. "It works," I am told. No doubt it does. But then I did not ask what is good about it, but what is *conservative* about it, and to say that it works is to dodge the question. Oddly enough, the issue is now much the same everywhere in the Western industrial world, and terminology causes little confusion here, though only the British still have a party called Conservative. (The Canadians added the word Progressive to theirs years ago.) But Americans seem no more puzzled than the British at the spectacle of a British Conservative government under Margaret Thatcher, which took power in 1979, governing with a radical fervor soon to be echoed, after 1981, by Ronald Reagan in the White House. And if people are not bothered by people called conservatives being radical, then it is plain they are not easily bothered. In fact, it is now widely accepted that a competitive free market is a conservative idea, puzzling as that must be to anyone who knows anything about conservative opposition to free trade in earlier centuries. Conservatives nowadays are the happy victims of an ideological hijack. They were hijacked in the mid-1970's by an idea so good that even Chinese communists have lately had to make concessions to it. For the first time in history, mankind, or most of it, is governed by a single economic idea.

That is a new place to be. There has never been a global economy before, and scarcely even the idea of one. Even if Louis XIV or Napoleon had succeeded in conquering Europe, they would not have achieved that, or wanted it, and though Hitler and Stalin may have been reaching toward it, they failed. Humanity is now in a new place in the sense of being all in the same place. You can fax faster than you can think. You can buy shares in Shanghai as well as in London, Paris, or New York. There are social effects to the global market that not everybody likes, and the late Christopher Lasch in his last book, *The Revolt of the Elites and the Betrayal of Democracy* (1995), laments the mobility of a new class of managers and their loss to their native soil. But the simple truth is that you have to compete to live, and competition has no frontiers. So the market is not a choice. There is no other way.

That explains, as nothing else can explain, the sudden enthusiasm of the leaders of the right for the free market. There may be nothing conservative about it, but they are past caring. In a recent BBC interview Richard Pearl, who is said to keep a bust of Lenin in his Washington think tank as a joke, has publicly praised the Reagan administration he once served as truly revolutionary in foreign affairs, and hailed the Republican majority in Congress as ready to complete, in home affairs, what he calls the second stage of the conservative revolution. So revolution is now conservative, and conservatism is revolutionary. That has been true for nearly 20 years. In her 11 years as prime minister (1979-90), Margaret Thatcher, newly converted to monetarism and the free market by disciples of Milton Friedman, headed the most radical government Britain has seen since Attlee's Labour ran out of steam around 1950. What is more, she seems to have enjoyed the ideas of people even more radical than her. In the mid-1970's it was suddenly, and for the first time in memory, intellectually chic to call yourself a conservative. No holds were barred. One member of her think tank at Ten Downing Street, Ferdinand Mount, who now edits the *Times Literary Supplement*, had the enormous effrontery early in her premiership to write and publish *The Subversive Family* (1982), where the adjective is a term of praise. The family, Mount argued, with plenty of journalistic panache and verve, is nothing like the bulwark of established morality it has sometimes been supposed. On the contrary, it is "the ultimate and only consistently subversive organization," on a long view, undermining the state and hostile to "all hierarchies, churches and ideologies." Good for the family, one is meant to think. That would be strong stuff even if the author were neither a family man nor a conservative. Mount was (and is) both, and the spectacle of a conservative attack on states, churches, and hierarchies is surely meant to astound. Most people, as Mount knows, have long supposed the family to be the guardian of tradition. Locke and Johnson thought that; so did Marx and Engels. In *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848 they dismissed aristocratic families as decadent and the proletarian family as almost nonexistent; but the modern family, they argue—the bourgeois family—based as it is on capital and the motive of private gain, is the enemy of all revolutionary change; and unable to accept the loss of wealth and power, it invokes its own destruction. For 100 years and more, that was a familiar and widely accepted view. Mount, in a world in which the left suddenly looked tired and the right radical, has rushed in to offer a wholly new model of the family as an institution: eccentric, creative, and resistant to the corporate disciplines of church and state. Suddenly change belonged to the right.

The notion is plausible enough to excite but perhaps not plausible enough to convince, and it is the contradictions within the New Right that have led to its recent difficulties. Some things must still be said in its favor. In its superior organization and self-discipline it was far more successful than the New Left, which it followed and imitated, in influencing political leaders, and through those leaders the course of events. It was not, like the New Left before it, a species of moral self-exhibitionism. It was sincere and it was tough. The New Left got no nearer to power than the antechamber, as in President Mitterrand's appointment of Régis Debray, a romantic Marxist in the Ché Guevara tradition, to the rank of aide in 1981; and romantic Marxists soon cease to be that, especially in office. The New Right, by contrast, had the courage of its convictions about privatization, low income tax, and deregulation. Where the New Left loved the rhetoric of the barricade, the New Right loved the cabinet room. It was like the difference between Being and Doing.

The New Right, in its day, wasted little time on moral declaration and openly despised speculative thought. "There is no such thing as society," Mrs. Thatcher once remarked briskly as prime minister—meaning, no doubt, that the word had been vastly overused. Monetarism was not an idea, she thought, still less a theory or ideology, merely something you knew in your bones. "It's just common sense," she would tell interviewers, "not to spend more than you have." Again, the New Right was genuinely internationalist, and without prating about the brotherhood of man, in the sense that it believed we go for the best price wherever it is and welcome capital whoever holds the strings. It personified Christopher Lasch's revolt of the elites.

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In Britain it trebled the number of private shareholders in a decade. What is more, it was unsnobbish, rather in the manner of Dickens' *Great Expectations*, where the hero has to accept that the money that made him a gentleman came from a convict and not from a genteel old lady. As the Emperor Vespasian put it, money has no smell, though the point is not a traditionally conservative one. By the 1980's democratic conservatism had ceased to reek of the country club and the wine-circle and had turned populist, enterprising, and brash.

But what, it may still be asked, is *conservative* about such conservatives? Or, again, where (if anywhere) are the *real* conservatives now? Who, that is to say, is still opposed to revolution and believes in traditional virtues, the faith of one's ancestors, and doing what granny says? Throughout the Western world the conservative idea, in the familiar sense, has suddenly lost its home. It has no great party or state, that is to say, like the American Republicans or the British Conservatives between the two world wars—parties that clearly endorsed a status quo and once made people feel cozy and unthreatened. Where now is the old family attorney in democratic politics, experienced, unideological, and safe? That old view even had its philosophers once, though it hardly needed them, and Michael Oakeshott's *Rationalism in Politics* (1962), written long before the rise of the New Right, was its classic statement. We govern, Oakeshott believed, as we ride a bicycle, by the seat of our pants. Rationalism, by which he meant theorizing, hardly comes into it. Theories are bunk, and politics, as he saw it, was not a science but a skill.

Now, with monetarism and strong talk about balancing the budget, we are back to science, or something that claims to be that, and it is a world that leaves no place for Oakeshottians. But if there is no home for conservatives, there are many homes, from the sadly despairing to the ideologically militant and even the downright violent. In Europe the pervading mood on the right is gentler, but it is no less various. In France as well as in Britain, there are now parties that believe that the Maastricht Treaty infringes the age-old sovereignties of nations and threatens their cultural identity. As Margaret Thatcher has said, it is a treaty too far. There may be no violence against abortion clinics, but there is a rising sentiment against sexual laxity. There are occasional bombs planted by ultranationalist groups like the Basque ETA or the Irish Republican Army. And above all there is a sense, less angry than sad, about a loss of the past.

The past, after all, is where conservatives were long supposed in nostalgic admiration to look to maintain the identity of a people and a tribe. Such nostalgia can be petty, like Flemish or Welsh nationalism. It can also have its respectable intellectual side. In *Beyond the New Right* (1993), for example, John Gray of Oxford, a disciple of F.A. Hayek and a partisan of the free market, has recently come to acknowledge the shortcomings of the Thatcher-Reagan years: not just the technical deficiencies of monetarism, which are clear enough, but what he calls the "neglect of history" by the New Right in its heyday in the 1980's, which put its supreme trust in mechanistic devices such as restricting the money supply, when "our only support is the vitality of our cultural traditions." That sounds like the old tune conservatives used to play, breaking through the nostrums of Friedman, Hayek, and their schools. Gray's last chapter proposes a Green conservatism as a way into the future, but it is also, as he knows, a way back. Green, after all, is what the Tory Country gentry used to be, and long before their party was taken over by free marketeers. Tories fought the railroads; they fought the motorways; and all that for highly selfish reasons that the Green parties of today might well decline to be associated with, in a distant age in which conservatism and conservation went hand in hand. You cannot experiment in the free market without discovering that, with all its virtues, there is nothing conservative about it. Gray, who has not abandoned the idea of the market, now seeks a reconciliation with the past, and he knows that it is difficult: he seeks a market liberalism in "a historical inheritance of norms and traditions." As he knows, market liberalism is now the almost universal demand of the free world, if only because it is the only system that can "protect values of liberty, independence, equity and prosperity." That is an enormous admission. It means that a 19th-century liberalism that our own bitter century has spent oceans of ink in trying to discredit—conservative and socialist ink, communist and fascist—has proved, after all, to have been right. That is to understate the matter. It is not just that no other system is as good. No other system *works* at all. Even Chinese communists now accept that they need the market, though not, or not yet, that they need liberalism. You trade or you starve.

Beyond the New Right is a soberly reasoned book, at once conscientious and puzzled, and it recognizes the difficulties of reconciling a Green program with a free market, on the one hand, and a respect for traditional values on the other. Its mood is exploring. So, on the whole, is the mood of the age. If conservatism has lost its way, no one else, in the opinion of the electorate, has clearly found it. Meanwhile the fragmentation of the right goes on. The death of socialism was bad news for the right, since a dud theory made a perfect opposition. Now conservatives face the harsh prospect of being voted for on their merits, or voted out for lack of them. It is a future to be contemplated with misgiving.

It will be said that we have seen the end of ideology before, and it did not last. But that does not alter the fact that ideologies like the New Left and the New Right have ended. Once again Samuel Johnson, who deserves to be a more fashionable author than he is, sums up the spirit of the age. "Most schemes of political improvement are very laughable things," he once told Boswell, and that sounds much like where we are now. The times, if not downright cynical, are wary. Lower taxes sound nice, but they can lead to a mounting national debt and crippling interest payments; indeed the servicing of the American national debt now outstrips the defense budget of the United States. Liberty is good, but family planning and abortion may deny rather than affirm it. A right to independence has often been taken for granted, especially in states as ancient as France or Britain; but a need to trade can lead to regulations that provoke bitter waves of xenophobia and a return to nationalism. In a global economy Johnson's contemptuous remark about schemes of political improvement may hold good, but the remark I began by quoting looks increasingly hard to believe. Hastening through bypaths to private profit, as he put it in 1756, no longer looks certain to prevent great or sudden change. Johnson wrote all that before the Industrial Revolution and before the American and French revolutions. Two centuries and more on, he would have been in little doubt that hastening toward private profit, whether by highways or byways, can be destructive of ancient tradition and the sovereignty of nations. The market, he would now have to admit, is radical.

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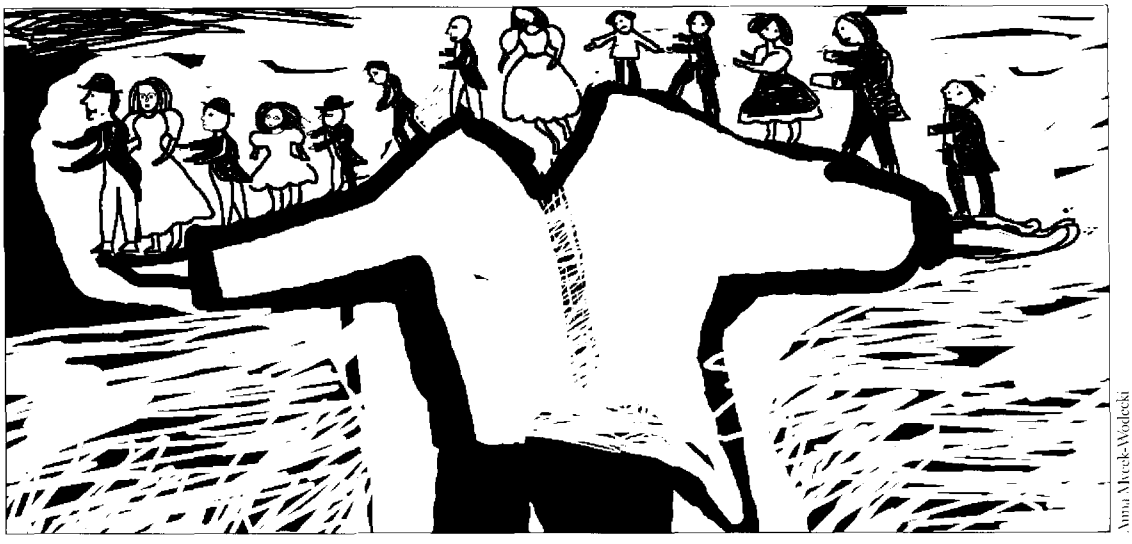
The Future of the Christian Right

by Martin Mawyer



Anna Mecek-Wodecki

Like a cold front, you could feel the defeat coming; and you did not need Dan Rather or George Gallup to prepare you. You knew it in your bones as you listened to the sound bites on the evening news: Clinton saying nothing and saying it well; Dole saying nothing and saying it poorly. It was a campaign of style rather than substance, and Bill Clinton was by far the better stylist.

In the absence of genuine issues, interest in the presidential race plummeted. According to the Committee for the Study of the American Electorate, President Clinton attracted the second lowest percentage of eligible voters since the election of John Quincy Adams. Despite an increase of seven million eligible voters over the last four years, the turnout declined in every state in the Union. As a matter of fact, in eight states, more people voted in senatorial and gubernatorial races than in the presidential race. So should we condemn Bob Dole for not attracting enough voters to avoid a decisive defeat? Should we blame him for failing to beat a scandal-ridden incumbent whom almost 60 percent of the people deemed untrustworthy?

No, it wasn't really Dole's fault. True, he had no message, certainly not one that appealed to the bulk of born-again Christians, who comprised fully 29 percent of the electorate. But the pro-family movement did not insist on a message. The movement's most visible leaders gave Dole a free pass on the major social issues. They told him he did not have to talk about partial-birth abortion or gays in the military or the distribution of condoms to schoolchildren or half a dozen other outrages that would have moved traditional-minded voters his way. And so he ended up talking about nothing.

Everett Dirksen summarized the way politicians think and act as follows: "When I feel the heat, I see the light." Bob Dole never felt the heat. It was our responsibility to light a fire under his moderate rump. In refusing to do so, we failed him as surely as we failed our own constituency. We should have forced Dole to be a better man and hence a better candidate.

So was the 1996 election a repudiation of conservative pro-family values? Already the architects of Dole's dismal campaign are trying to place the blame on that perennial source of all wickedness—the religious right. One GOP expert has suggested that without the pro-life, pro-family movement to appease, Dole might have run a more aggressive race. (On what issues?) Another has blamed Pat Buchanan for forcing Dole to spend all his primary money by early summer. (The GOP leadership obviously believes the liberal wing of the party has an indisputable right to pick the presidential nominee prior to the primaries.)

But what happened in the congressional races indicates that the country is more pro-life and pro-family than either Bob Dole or the national Republican leadership. In fact, far from a "moderate" victory—as the news analysts were doggedly maintaining into the wee hours of the morning—the 1996 election was a mini-triumph for traditional values.

Not only did Republicans increase their numbers in the Senate, but conservative, pro-family forces made even greater gains. Seven examples: conservative hardliner Sam Brownback took the vacant seat of the Old Equivocator, Bob Dole; Pat Roberts, a moderate conservative, replaced liberal Nancy Kassebaum; pro-family Republican Jeff Sessions took the seat of retiring liberal Democrat Howell Heflin; conservative Republican Gordon Smith replaced liberal Republican Mark Hatfield; pro-family Republican Tim Hutchinson captured the seat of liberal Democrat David Pryor; conservative Chuck Hagel, a young Republican, will replace liberal Democrat James Exon, who retired; and GOP abortion foe Michael Enzi now owns the seat of retiring fellow-Republican Alan Simpson, who was a liberal on the key social issues. These changes are substantial and translate into a significant shift in the balance of power.

Despite the growing belief among liberal Democrats that they would be able to recapture control of the House, the Re-

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publican majority prevailed. To be sure, the pro-family, pro-life margin has been reduced by eight to ten seats. But several of the newcomers are outspoken pro-family activists, including Robert Aderholt of Alabama (who described himself as "the protector of traditional Alabama values") and athlete Jim Ryun (whom the *Washington Post* called "arguably one of the most conservative politicians to win a seat in the House").

In order to position himself to recapture the presidency, Bill Clinton had to sign the Defense of Marriage Act, endorse tax relief for families, and talk about "family values" during the campaign. And since he failed again to win a majority of the popular vote, no one can really argue he has a mandate. In response to the mood of the electorate, he replaced chief of staff Leon Panetta with the more conservative Erskine Bowles of North Carolina.

So social conservatives fared well in the 1996 congressional elections, and it is just possible that the country is beginning to return to the norms of its history—to marriage, family, respect for life, individual freedom, and self-reliance. But on the national level, the Republicans do not seem to acknowledge this trend. If the Democratic leadership wants to abolish traditional values as quickly as possible, the Republican hierarchy merely wants to move more slowly in the same direction.

To this end, party leaders are already talking about a Powell-Kemp ticket in the year 2000—the one in favor of abortion, the other an economic determinist. No one in authority can bear to say the obvious: that the party needs to run a pro-family conservative who can bring born-again Christians and blue-collar Catholics back to the GOP. Reagan won on a pro-family platform. So did George Bush the first time out. Then the Republicans lapsed into "moderation" and lost two elections in a row to a "moderate" Democrat up to his earlobes in scandal.

The question for pro-family Christians: What should we do about the Republican Party? We all know that the people who really call the shots in the GOP are closet liberals on social issues. They would rather lose elections than win with people like us. So how do we respond to the fact that they call our candidates "extremist," deny us a voice at the national convention, and refuse to speak to our issues during presidential campaigns? There are at least three possible responses.

First, brushed aside, we can continue to support the GOP, hoping that someday the party leaders will be struck blind on the road to Damascus. This is the course we followed in 1992 and 1996. Christian pro-family leaders told Bob Dole that he did not have to address the great moral questions of our time. The so-called Christian right put aside its principles in order to go with the apparent primary winner; and when Bob Dole lost the general election, we could not even console ourselves with the thought that we had gone down fighting for a good cause. Yet this attitude is precisely what some of the same pro-family leaders are already recommending. As one of them said after the GOP convention, "All we want is a place at the table." Never mind that no one will be allowed to say grace—or that our bowls will remain empty. The people who take this course of action are already preparing us for the candidacy of Colin Powell—who favors abortion, but who can, they tell us, win in the year 2000. At present, the smart crowd is betting on this strategy to prevail in the GOP.

Second, we can adopt the Barry Goldwater approach and try to capture the Republican Party in the next four years. This strategy rests on the assumption that the GOP is redeemable, that its "moderate" leadership can be persuaded to support a conservative candidate next time in order to win back the presidency—and that conservatives can, in a mere four years, purge the party of its Haley Barbours and Bill Paxons and take control from top to bottom.

There are several problems with this approach. In the first place, most of the GOP's big donors are moderates rather than hard-core conservatives. They are the ones who write the big checks three and four years before a presidential election. Evangelicals may provide the grassroots workers, but pro-business, pro-abortion fat cats fund campaigns. And the fat cats are not interested in a pro-family agenda. (As one businessman said during the primary season, "Politics is supposed to be about economics not morality.") Increasingly, multinational corporations are promoting abortion, gay rights, and the dismemberment of the American family. Why should they contribute money to a GOP that nominates a pro-life, pro-family candidate?

In current politics, the golden rule is: "He who has the gold makes the rules." That is not merely a bumper sticker slogan. It defines one of the hard realities of Republican politics—money talks. So if pro-family activists wanted to take over the GOP, they would have to find a way to come up with $30 million over the next two or three years, *just to give their candidate a chance in the primaries*. This task would be more daunting than the six labors of Hercules. We are talking about an enormous amount of money to be raised largely among lower- and middle-income people who ordinarily devote their extra dollars to private schools and the church-building fund. Pro-family political leaders would have to convince these good people that the Republican Party is worth yet more sacrificial giving. It would be a hard sell—particularly after Bob Dole.

And once they had found a way to raise money, pro-family leaders would have to field a credible candidate—and field one fast. You can bet that liberal Republican hopefuls are already making phone calls, writing fundraising letters, and lining up local support in every state. A run for the presidency is a four-year operation. Even if the candidate does not declare until 1998, his supporters should be activated no later than the spring of 1997.

So could pro-family activists unite quickly behind a single candidate who supports their agenda? Such a swift selection process would be virtually impossible within the current Republican Party, where GOP moderates—terrified of a pro-family, pro-life candidate—would do everything in their power to meddle in our affairs, complicate our deliberations, confuse our supporters, and slander our best possibilities. Look what they did once they realized Pat Buchanan was a real threat to liberal control of the Republican Party. And look how we were treated at the convention. After 1996, it should be clear that we are unwelcome guests in the GOP, barely tolerated because of our usefulness in the general election, but always regarded with suspicion and distaste.

Think how much cheaper and better it would be to discuss potential candidates in a spirit of mutual purpose—and in the relative peace of our own house. There, in an act of prayerful deliberation, we could choose a candidate other than George Bush or Bob Dole. We could reject anyone who was weak and pliant, who scurried from one side of an issue to the other in a futile effort to please an abstract electorate defined by Gallup and Roper. We could pick a person who believed unshakably in the right values and who could articulate them in such a way

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that they seemed attractive to a majority of Americans. That would mean reinventing the rhetoric of the mainstream media without budging an inch on the issues. Without the jaybirds of liberal Republicanism shrieking around us, we could do it. Ronald Reagan showed us how.

These, then, are formidable objections to a strategy based on capturing control of the Republican Party four years from now. And the more you calculate the odds, the more impossible the task looms. It might take 12 or 16 years to put together the kind of effort necessary to build a genuine consensus in a divided party already corrupted by the love of power and money—and by then the Supreme Court may well have ruled that men and women can marry their parakeets.

And suppose we succeeded? Far from rewarding us with cheers and confetti, Republican liberals would do everything in their power to crush our movement and smear our candidate *during the general election*. They would run a third party candidate if necessary, as they did against Ronald Reagan in 1980 and Oliver North in 1994. They would rather lose to liberal Democrats than win with bigots and ignoramuses like us.

Finally, even if we won, we would lose—just as we did in 1980—when conservatives thought they had elected one of their own and then had to be content with a "coalition government" run in large measure by the Bush crowd. After Ronald Reagan's victory, the "moderate" wing of the party, led by James Baker III, subverted the Reagan Revolution by blocking the President-elect's supporters from key appointments, installing their own cronies, and then conducting the most crucial affairs of government behind the President's back. If our man won the general election, they would do everything in their power to take over again, demanding the biggest share of the pie for their minimal role in a victorious campaign.

But enough of such speculation. We do not have to remain in the Republican Party, for there is a better road to follow: we could create a new party to carry the pro-life, pro-family banner. This is undoubtedly the most attractive option, but not without its perils. First, let us consider the arguments against such a strategy.

To begin with, Americans do not take third parties seriously. You have to go back to the early years of the GOP to find one that ultimately won the presidency. Fremont ran as its candidate in 1856, and Abraham Lincoln was elected four years later, though only by a plurality. Since then, a number of third parties have surfaced, but few have been able to win even a handful of electoral votes. After spending millions, Ross Perot's Reform Party has yet to carry a single state, and its strength declined significantly in 1996. For this reason, it would be difficult (though not impossible) to persuade a majority of conservative activists to leave the GOP for an entirely new organization.

Then, too, the system is set up to discourage third parties. It is very difficult to gain ballot access to all 50 states. To do so, we would need time, money, and a dedicated organization—all of which are in short supply, even for the established parties. Unless its leadership had strong grass-roots support—or enormous wealth, like Ross Perot—a third party effort would court failure.

Finally, the media would paint any such efforts in the darkest colors on their palette. Liberals have a vested interest in maintaining the two-party system, since it usually results in compromise candidates and a watered-down agenda, both supportive of the status quo. The liberal media always presume to define the "center" in relation to their own position. In so doing, they characterize conservatives as "outside the mainstream"—even when their views are supported by the majority of Americans. If you were disturbed by the unprincipled attacks on Pat Buchanan after he won the New Hampshire primary, you would be even more shocked by the names the same commentators and editorialists would call organizers of a viable pro-life, pro-family party. You can be certain we would be labeled "bigots," "hate mongers," "fascists," and "Nazis"—to mention but a few of the terms routinely used by the left. If you do not think such demonizing can be effective, see what the name-calling did to Buchanan's support in a matter of days.

Given these obstacles, why would anyone want to start yet another third party in order to advance the pro-life, pro-family cause? Several very good reasons come to mind. First, neither major party is currently defending traditional American values. Congressional leaders in both houses of Congress have cooperated in side-tracking legislation designed to correct the most outrageous actions of the Supreme Court, including the forbidding of prayer in the public arena and the legalization of abortion. Republicans as well as Democrats have voted to increase funding for the gay rights movement, which can survive only with a massive infusion of federal dollars. In fact, in the last week of the 1996 campaign, Dole's chief aide, Sheila Burke, met with gay rights activists and assured them that, if elected, Dole would support homosexuality as strongly as the Clinton administration. A genuine conservative party would never engage in such double-dealing.

Second, if a pro-family, pro-life third party actually won the White House, the American people could expect to get what they voted for. In a party as philosophically divided as the GOP, "coalition government" is probably inevitable. Such would not be the case in the government of our pro-life, pro-family President. We could choose our own people to fill every job in every nook and cranny of the executive branch. And if James Baker III tried to climb in a window, we could slam it shut on his fingers.

Finally—win or lose—it would be a cleansing experience for pro-life, pro-family conservatives to vote for a candidate and a party that truly represented the values they endorse. Not since 1980 have we been given a pure choice. By 1984, it was clear that liberals were running the most influential segments of the executive branch (e.g., the Department of Health and Human Services), and in 1988 and 1992 we had to vote for two-faced George Bush and, in 1996, no-faced Bob Dole. We could redeem all those tainted votes if we fielded a genuinely pro-life, pro-family candidate, even on a third-party ticket. How nice it would be to go to sleep on election night, knowing we had done the right thing—win or lose.

To summarize: going along with a Colin Powell or a Pete Wilson is spiritual suicide, a prescription for the ultimate moral collapse of the nation. Whatever we do, we should not again follow some high-profile Judas into the camp of another liberal Republican. Too many pro-family leaders have already abandoned principle to stake their souls on the triumph of political expediency. We must resist the temptation to compromise with party leaders in order to be members of the club. We cannot allow ourselves to believe that there is no political salvation outside the Republican Party. If the GOP turns its back on our nation's traditional values, it is our responsibility to turn our backs on the GOP. After all, we do not just want "a place at the table." We want to help plan the menu and serve the meal. And we want to say grace before anyone takes the first bite.

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As for capturing the GOP, forget it—unless you believe the Holy Spirit will intervene (which is possible, of course, but highly unlikely). Why would God want to save the Republican Party from the oblivion it has so eagerly sought and so richly deserves?

Again, our best course of action is the establishment of a third party, and as quickly as possible—in a matter of months. Such an action will demand an enormous amount of advance work and tens of millions of dollars. It will require a candidate and a structure—soon, very soon. No single group can accomplish this end alone. To be successful, we must involve the entire pro-life, pro-family movement—or at least those who are willing to break their recent ties with the GOP. To implement this strategy, I suggest that all interested pro-life, pro-family groups hold a summit meeting immediately to form our own political party, to define our agenda, to determine a means of enlisting a candidate or candidates, and to lay plans for fundraising and the development of a grassroots campaign organization.

We must establish the structure and goals of this party in the crucible of honest debate—and we must do so publicly, while the entire nation looks on. This debate must be among those who share a common commitment to traditional America. We may disagree initially as to strategy and priorities, but we must be one in our commitment to first principles. (Those who believe that a political party should focus exclusively on economic issues—that social concerns are irrelevant and ultimately embarrassing—should remain in the GOP. They are right where they belong.)

We should come out of that initial meeting with a clear understanding of what we want from the federal government—and, more importantly, what we do not want. We want a constitutional amendment to permit prayer in schools. We want to exclude homosexuals from military service and end all federal funding of the gay rights movement. We want to undo *Roe* v. *Wade* by whatever constitutional means possible. We want to stop Washington from promoting the distribution of condoms and the approval of sexual license in the public schools. Most of all, we want the federal government to cease meddling in our private lives and put an end to its current efforts to change the moral code that has traditionally governed our conduct as a people.

That is the kind of agenda we must frame and then lay before our potential supporters nationwide. We should ask millions of pro-family, pro-life advocates to pledge financial support only to a party or candidate dedicated unambiguously to traditional values. Then—and only then—can we be strong enough to tell our political opponents: "No more uncertain trumpets. No more lukewarm Social Contracts with America that hedge on abortion and hide from gay rights. No more subservient support for a political party—any party—that won't let our leaders speak at its national convention and won't campaign on our principles, even when they're a part of the official platform. And no more Bob Doles."

If we delivered that message with unity of purpose and voice, millions would listen and join our movement. Americans have always responded to an unequivocal commitment to truth, virtue, and freedom. They would respond again in overwhelming numbers—or face the ravages of a grim and soulless future. The electorate is there for the taking, so let us get on with the business of restoring America.

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Last Rites

by Alan Sullivan

If this is death
Blotching his face with sores and hives,
Why must a dead man strive for breath
Until the ambulance arrives?

Heaven forbid
He suffer more indignities:
The bedpans of an invalid,
Disfiguring metastases.

Better to go
With some panache. His shrunken hands
Fumble at belt and bow as though
To fasten life's unraveled strands.

I find him dressed
With strict attention to details,
Matching the hues of pants and vest
With cyanotic fingernails.

Does he believe
Death will respect his gallantry
Or does he merely preconceive
An orderly eternity?

I'll never know.
I've scarcely learned to sympathize
With the old, unforgiven foe;
And my last chance to exorcise

Filial guilt
Passes without a word of thanks
For homes his patient labor built,
For unexpected puns and pranks,

For strength and strife.
To speak so late would seem caprice.
Lost in reliving rites of life,
He longs only for death's release.

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Martin Luther King, Jr., as Conservative Hero

by Paul Gottfried

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

In *Campus*, a newsletter of the conservative Intercollegiate Studies Institute, a letter last spring from a student subscriber questioned comments about Martin Luther King found in the preceding issue's feature essay, "A Rage for Merit." This article portrayed King as a passionate critic of affirmative action, and this, according to the student, does not square with the facts: "Today's civil rights left-wing establishment correctly understands that King was a left-wing redistributionist and no amount of revisionism will convince them that he was really Clarence Thomas's mentor." Furthermore, "making Martin Luther King out to be a promoter of a color-blind society is like putting a proverbial pig in a wedding gown—it fools no one and annoys the pig. The right should stop this bad faith exercise and leave such games to the left."

The "bad faith exercise" already has legions of practitioners identified with the right. For more than a decade the "cult of MLK," to borrow the phrase of Samuel Francis, has flourished among conservatives and still has not been put on the road to extinction. "Conservative" Republicans Newt Gingrich and Jack Kemp were among the fervent sponsors of a King national holiday, and "cultural conservatives," led by Bill Bennett, Harry Jaffa, and the *American Spectator*, exalt King as the incarnation of the American "conservative" ideal of equality. In "Giving Shape to Cultural Conservatism," an essay published in the *American Spectator* (November 1986), chief educational advisor to the Reagan administration Chester Finn outlined a patriotic calendar built in large part around King and his civil rights revolution. Of the three national holidays intended to promote civic unity, only one focused on a particular historical figure, the birthday of Martin Luther King. That figure, we are informed, instantiated by his life what Finn calls cultural conservatism. King is also imagined to be of such overshadowing merit that no sensible person would dispute his centrality in the American pantheon of heroes.

Such assertions were made by self-described conservatives only three years after King's birthday was established as a national holiday. As Theodore Pappas and David Garrow remind us from opposite ends of the political spectrum, the honor proposed for King encountered stiff opposition when it came up in Congress. In 1983 a majority of Americans, according to national polls, opposed the King holiday, and the Republican senators and congressmen dwelled on King's ties to communist advisors and documented sexual escapades. Among those harboring suspicions about King's character was the President himself. Then President Reagan almost vetoed the holiday, but was persuaded to put aside his expressed reservations, for the sake of racial reconciliation. In all likelihood Reagan still remembered the warnings about King that had once filled the conservative press. Well into the 70's, William F. Buckley had stressed King's socialist opinions and communist associations. And that Jewish commentator on Christian theology for *National Review*, Will Herberg, had inveighed against King as a Marxist radical pretending to be a Christian. From July 14 through September 8, 1964, in his most vitriolic prose, Herberg mocked King's claim to stand in the Christian tradition of nonviolent resistance to tyranny. Herberg insisted that King equated such Christian resistance with a "religious right to violate law," indeed any law that displeased him. Moreover, the passive resistance championed by King was aimed at getting others to exercise force. By causing enough disturbance, King hoped to bring into play federal power, which would overthrow the voting and social practices of Southern states.

The brief gathered against King as a social radical manipulated by communist advisors, such as his speechwriter Stanley Levison, was not entirely a product of the right. The *New York Times* had treated these charges seriously in a feature article of August 28, 1967, and in the essay accompanying its choice of King as Man of the Year for 1963, *Time* magazine had also

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touched on King's troubling associations. More damningly, a young black liberal journalist, Carl Rowan, had published an extended diatribe against King in *Reader's Digest* in September 1967, which was widely discussed until King's assassination in the following year. According to Rowan, King had become an embarrassment to the civil rights cause. He was a figure with an "exaggerated appraisal" of his own abilities who seemed unwilling or unable to free himself from "subversives." The vehemence of his opposition to the Vietnam War came from his communist advisors, and the result of his increasingly radical speeches was King's growing isolation from the political base he would need to succeed as a responsible black leader: "King had become *persona non grata* to Lyndon Johnson and has alienated many of the Negro's friends and armed his foes." Rowan's caustic observations are particularly noteworthy in view of the leftward direction in which he later moved. Needless to say, the very mention of his objections about King's character and career would today be condemned as vigorously on the right as on the left.

Indeed it might be argued that the respectable American right, consisting of neoconservatives and their dependents, have praised King far more extravagantly than self-avowed liberals. While the liberal left has flitted from one black hero to the next, depending on its changing agenda, conservatives, by contrast, have stuck with King as their preferred icon. They have associated him with the dream of equality evoked by Lincoln, the Old Testament prophetic tradition of witnessing against injustice, and St. Paul's ideal of a universal spiritual community. In one version of the King legacy offered by Dan Himmelfarb in *Commentary* (May 1988), the slain civil rights leader is made into the endpoint of the "Western liberal tradition." The ideas of Locke, Montesquieu, and Madison are all seen as flowing into King, while his critics are relegated to the status of standing outside the dominant political tradition of the postmedieval West. For Kemp, Finn, Gingrich, and Jaffa, King embodied the virtues of the original civil rights movement, before it descended into the advocacy of racial quotas. All King supposedly wanted were federally enforced guarantees for a color-blind society. Once that was achieved, it was King's hope, we would all be judged by "the content of our character" and not by "the color of our skin." The essential King, for his conservative boosters, can be found in passages from the speech that he gave during the March on Washington in August 1963 and in the apparent references to natural law from his letter written in a Birmingham jail earlier the same year. Allusions to these documents keep coming up among prominent conservative critics of contemporary educational fashion. Thus Dinesh D'Souza, Lynne Cheney, Roger Kimball, and Charles Sykes all cite King as a profound Christian theologian, who would be disappointed by our deviations from his vision of interracial brotherhood. The contemporary left is accused of desecrating his memory by formulating race-conscious policies and by acquiescing in black separatist demands.

The one trouble with this conservative exercise in revisionist history is its glaring counterfactualness. Unlike the descriptions of King found in the work of his left-wing biographer David Garrow, those of the recent conservative movement have no correspondence to reality. They exemplify the use of partial, decontextualized truth to create a desired image: a civil rights martyr who died for neoconservative values. In this fabricated legend King lived and died to justify that part of the civil rights revolution that today's official right endorses, as opposed to that part it does not. The moderate legacy which some are intent on preserving consists of federal control of the franchise, demonization of the white South and its history, and social engineering undertaken for the sake of a color-blind society. What King, from this perspective, must not be allowed to stand for are those positions that the civil rights movement supposedly came to embrace afterward, that is, black separatism and racially based quotas. These are seen to be extraneous to the original struggle for black equality, as reflected in a morally immaculate leader. It was this idealized King who saw his work culminate in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Both were allegedly roadmarks on the way to federally enforced color-blindness.

This received account of contemporary history includes questionable assumptions, and this may explain why conservative powerbrokers do not want to delve too deeply into it. Instead they have gotten on with the job of turning King into a cult. While groups and institutions have changed their collective mind about particular historical figures, one must assume that among honest thinkers such a process would take generations. Thus the Catholic Church went from burning Aristotle's (presumed) works to treating them as a pagan preparation for Christian revelation. But this reconsideration did not occur overnight: it took several centuries, up until the Councils of Trent, before it was done. In the intervening time lively and prolonged debates took place about the texts and thinker in question. Of course modern political movements are not as intellectually scrupulous or as bound by defining worldviews. And so American movement conservatives, like American communists who defended the Nazi-Soviet pact, came to believe or pretended to believe that what until recently they had viewed as demonic was not that at all.

In this fideistic fashion conservatives proceeded to reassess King. During a period of weeks in 1983, all or most movement conservatives clustered around the Beltway had a timely change of heart. They went from raging against King's radical ideas to celebrating him as the conscience of America. I still recall a syndicated column by Aram Bakshian, a former Nixon speechwriter, from October 1983, which enunciated the new wisdom. Bakshian urged his fellow conservatives to rally to the celebration of King, to testify to their faith "that America is now a better place than it used to be because of him." This was also about the time that conservatives began to entertain other second thoughts, for example, about flying Confederate flags over Southern statehouses or about having the government decorate a Confederate monument in Washington. The operative term for those having these second thoughts was "staying in the political conversation." Only those, it might be assumed, who had moved beyond Carl Rowan's demurs of 1967 could remain or become respectable conservatives.

For the neoconservatives, who by 1983 were coming to control American conservatism financially and programmatically, this new party line was second nature. Having brought with them what James Burnham called a "leftist gestalt" into the movement they occupied, they went on speaking as they had done before. As leftists they had admired King and the civil rights legislation of the mid-60's. They continued to applaud both after they had taken over the right, a process which was completed by the early 80's. More importantly, the neoconservatives got others who had thought differently about King to join their chorus of praise. Thus the figure whom today's con-

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servative magazines extol as "Mr. Cultural Conservatism," William Bennett, is a Great Society Democrat, albeit one who has joined the Republican Party. Not surprisingly, Bennett commends to his followers the "conservatism" of Martin Luther King.

But there is a hitch in playing too boldly with the facts: someone may notice even if forbidden to do so. Historical records are there which can be set against politically motivated misrepresentations of what people said and did. And there are those ornery enough to dredge up the past precisely to embarrass those who abuse the truth. None of which is to say that earnest scholars cannot differ in their readings of events and personalities. In *The True and Only Heaven*, for example, Christopher Lasch distinguishes between the early and late Martin Luther King, the first being a traditional pastor ministering to his flock in the face of racial indignity and the second being a radical who tried to get the modern state to revolutionize society. Though these personae surely overlapped, Lasch's portrait of King shows there was change taking place in his subject. And Lasch never recoils from biographical truths that American conservatives studiously avoid mentioning, that King made hateful statements about whites and truckled to black advocates of violence. It is also hard to ignore other traits in King that any honest reckoning must take into account: his plagiarism, lechery, and political grandstanding will not disappear from the historical record, however frantically liberal journalists talk about Southern racism and however desperately conservative publicists quote from King's borrowed rhetoric. His views on preferential treatment for blacks were the same as those of later civil rights leaders. In a *Playboy* interview of 1965 (reprinted in the anthology *Testament of Hope*), and in his booklet *Where Do We Go from Here?*, King demands reparations from whites and job quotas for blacks. King insisted on more exacting compensation for his race than even that which Bill Clinton's Justice Department is now demanding. In a town, he explains, where blacks are 30 percent of the total population, every business and educational institution should have to recruit blacks in the same proportion.

Such opinions should not shock a careful student of recent American history, and it was therefore inevitable that someone should notice the lack of congruity between conservative hagiography and what King actually said. But the falsifications about King tell far more about their perpetrators than about the one they are intended to grace. The American conservative movement is not simply fibbing about a personality whose ascendancy it saw as inevitable in 1983. This excuse, one I have heard repeatedly from political observers, ignores the sad truth that American conservatism has become tainted by lies. Its adherents have fallen victim to what Cicero called *malum turpe*, a tendency to falsify which infects the practitioner. Today's conservatives rush to reconstruct their history in order not to make others feel uncomfortable.

Typical here is a tendency prevalent among older conservatives to obscure or hide their past observations which might be termed racist. A case in point is a recent syndicated column by William Rusher in the *Washington Times* (May 25, 1996), about the "present state of affairs" with regard to preferential treatment for minorities. This arose, or so we are told, from "years of deliberate misinterpretations of the language of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964," the only purpose for which was "to bar discrimination against black Americans." But this was not the way *National Review*, which Rusher published in the 1960's, interpreted the Civil Rights Act. In successive editorials, and most trenchantly on December 1, 1964, *National Review*, and presumably its publisher, warned against the indeterminate powers given to federal bureaucrats under the recent civil rights legislation.

> Unlike the descriptions of King found in the work of his left-wing biographer David Garrow, those of the recent conservative movement have no correspondence to reality.

All of these warnings were justified. And in 1964 it was not only conservative intellectuals but political celebrities, including Barry Goldwater, George Bush, and Ronald Reagan, who raised the same arguments against a looming legislative disaster. That Southern warhorse Senator Richard Russell was right when he observed that Title Seven of the proposed act would lead to the government's imposition of quotas. This indeed happened even before Lyndon Johnson left the presidency, and the practice was continued and expanded under his Republican successor. Unlike Hubert Humphrey, who offered to eat his hat if the 1964 legislation resulted in quotas, conservatives knew this would happen. They perceived not only the problematic phraseology in the Civil Rights Act, but even more significantly the dynamics of the civil rights movement and of the modern administrative state. In the 1960's, even garden-variety conservatives had some sense of history and were principled enough to stand athwart what they saw as an institutionalized revolution.

What we find today is a state of denial among those conservatives who can recall a different past, about their own moral and intellectual accomplishments. Those postwar conservatives in our midst struggle to give the impression that they started out as being more in today's mainstream than was the case. Such people have not come to terms with their own past, even though their former critical stance now seems, in historical retrospect, more defensible than ever before. Nor do they make the necessary distinction between saying "I told you so" and pretending they never uttered a politically unfashionable warning that turned out to be true. This may be analogous to the rejection of another difference by contemporary conservatives, the one between recognizing Martin Luther King's indisputable courage and ascribing to him qualities and views that were not his. The inability or unwillingness to make such distinctions is symptomatic of Cicero's *malum turpe*. The self-contaminating avoidance of truth begins with deliberate falsification and ends with the liar's inability to recall whatever knowledge of a subject he once had. Such an illness is clearly ravaging the American right.

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Clip Clop, Bang Bang

by J.O. Tate

Quantrill's War: The Life and Times of William Clarke Quantrill
by Duane Schultz
New York: St. Martin's Press;
338 pp., $24.95

The Devil Knows How to Ride: The True Story of William Clarke Quantrill and His Confederate Raiders
by Edward E. Leslie
New York: Random House;
534 pp., $30.00

The manipulative sensationalism regarding any display of the Confederate battle flag continues unabated. The *New York Times* gets hot and bothered, or sexually aroused—or whatever it is that the *New York Times* becomes—whenever that banner appears over the capitol of South Carolina or on a vanity tag in Maryland, indeed anywhere. The shibboleths of liberalism are applied whenever it is possible to maintain power today by controlling the national memory of yesterday, and the day before. "Heritage Not Hate" is the motto of some who defend the right to display the disputed flag, but the problem may be that hate is precisely what our heritage is. Strangely enough, that hate was broadcast a century and a half ago by spokesmen for a gospel of love—and it still is. It has long since become the language of power in our society.

What a shame that our effort to remember our own history should itself be so contentious. But then again, the Civil War was a shame itself, and there is something perversely appropriate in having the national memory supervised by

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

replicants of the most obnoxious personalities of that war. Sure, remembering the Civil War is one thing Americans ought to do, and for a host of reasons. The memory of heroic actions, of courage and sacrifice, have traditionally been thought to be the stuff of civic virtue, as Pericles memorably indicated. But while I do believe that there is something to be gained by cultivating the memory of great deeds, I also believe that there can be a chastening profit in remembering cowardice, cruelty, and mendacity as well. The Civil War was a degrading as well as a glorious experience. Above all, it was a bloody one.

For every image of a brave soldier charging forward, we should also remember a skulking "bummer" burning down some old lady's house. Killing in combat is not murder, but there was plenty of murder in the Civil War and wanton destruction of property. "Mr. Lincoln's Invasion" was among other things a gigantic stick-up, and the pseudo-Biblical cadences to which we have resorted ever since in order to sugarcoat the bitterness are today parroted by those kindly humanoids who promote gross infanticide as a palliative for "women's health," all the while intoning their concern for our children. To whose advantage, some may wonder, is all the confusion and divisiveness? But not to worry. The editors of the *New York Times* are feeling fine.

Perhaps a little sober reflection and even humility are in order, for just as the Stars and Stripes do not exclusively represent everything we would wish them to, the Confederate flag does not either. I do not think that the Confederate flag was flown by the raiders who sacked Lawrence, Kansas, on August 21, 1863, burning over 100 houses and shooting dead some 200 unarmed boys and men. Quantrill was a captain in the Confederate Army, but his appropriate banner would have been the one nominated by Kit Dalton in his reminiscences, *Under the Black Flag*. Frank James and Cole Younger declared after the war that they never saw this black flag, but to me it is the black flag, not the Confederate one, that represents everything vile in violence. There can be no justification for the atrocities at Lawrence, but the story of the border strife between Missouri and Kansas—the real beginning of the Civil War—shows that there was a background of hatred and revenge. When the war began, the Yankee Abolitionists were enfranchised and the Southern firecaters were too. In this chaos, as Duane

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Schultz has suggested, a deadly trickster like Quantrill could not fail to see the opportunity of a lifetime.

The story of the Border Wars is a story that every American should know, particularly because so few know it. The part of it that is familiar (though almost always misapprehended) deals with John Brown. Brown's massacre at Pottowatomie Creek, complete with night-stalking, corpse mutilations, and God's blessing, has never discredited him as a hero, though he is rather better interpreted as a madman. Since his bloody-minded insanity literally became national policy, he remains a model of rectitude, a prophet indeed. But we might ask why such a killer and schemer retains his aureole of righteousness, when Quantrill's name conjures revulsion. If Quantrill had thumped the Bible harder and taken money from the pious divines of New England, he would have made a better career move. And he could still have murdered to his heart's content.

But that was not his way. William Clarke Quantrill was an aimless youth from Canal Dover, Ohio, who inscribed Abolitionist sentiments in letters to his mother. He wandered fecklessly and he taught school rather successfully, which in those days indicated a certain order of intelligence. Unable to resist the temptations of the Border Wars, he sneakily participated in the anarchy he loved. He posed as an Abolitionist, and then sold back the slaves he had stolen; he also pretended to be a "border ruffian" and lived with the Indians. He told either side he was a spy for the other, while stealing horses, burning houses, and probably murdering some individuals. Arson, thievery, and murder had a sanction in the Border Wars. Eventually, in the raid on the Walker farm, he turned on the "idealistic Abolitionists" (Schultz's phrase) he had conned. He arranged their betrayal and declared he was from Maryland—a Southern loyalist, indeed.

The struggles on the Kansas-Missouri border were magnified in the war. They show that our Civil War was both civil and a war in the worst senses of those words. The war justified unreason and attracted not only the flower of the nation's youth but also its lowest elements, including not just Quantrill but such saints as the vicious Charles Jennison (of "Jennison's Jayhawkers"), and the others of his ilk. Riding with Quantrill were men who became not soldiers but killers—men such as Bloody Bill Anderson, who draped the scalps of his victims around his horse's neck. To ask why Quantrill fought as he did is to face a mystery, but even Bloody Bill had his reasons. When he was killed and decapitated, a cord with 53 knots was found in his pocket. He was literally keeping score with the Yankees, who were responsible for kidnapping his sister and placing her in a decrepit building in Kansas City, the collapse of which killed her, crippled another sister, and killed a cousin of Cole Younger and three other women as well. The raw memories of the Border Wars were intensified during the war as the federal authorities not only raised the black flag in various proclamations but in one of the most remarkable episodes in American history created the "Burnt District" on the Missouri border, explicitly making war on the civilian population which fed and harbored Quantrill's men in some cases. The escalation of violence to such a dreadful scale is remembered if at all today by the names of Quantrill's massacres at Lawrence and at Baxter Springs. But what about the Palmyra massacre of captured Southerners, ten of whom were clumsily executed in 1862, or many another depredation?

Bill Anderson was bloody all right, but Cole Younger, author of *The Story of Cole Younger by Himself* (1903), must be the most interesting of the men who rode with Quantrill. If an American can be an aristocrat, he was one. His paternal great-grandfather had served at Valley Forge; his paternal great-grandmother was related to "Light-Horse Harry" Lee. The son of a prosperous planter who was no secessionist, the young Cole was threatened by Captain Irvin Walley of the 5th Missouri Federal Militia, who subsequently arranged his father's assassination. The Yankees persecuted Cole's mother from 1862 to 1870, enough so that at the cessation of hostilities he felt justified in continuing his lawlessness. But there are several stories which attest to Cole Younger's mercy in various incidents during the war. He had his opportunities to kill, and to refuse to do so. To read of all the bloodshed is a bone-chilling as well as a blood-boiling experience. Even Quantrill, who sometimes demonstrated qualities of intelligence and finer feeling, emerges as a man worth remembering, one who has something to tell us. Because the federal generals Halleck and Ewing and others raised the black flag, they forced Quantrill and his men to do likewise, for the raiders knew that death was the only thing they could expect if taken during the war. Quantrill himself was shot in Kentucky after Appomattox, where he had gone declaring he would kill Lincoln.

Quantrill is remembered (or should be) as the man who exhorted at Lawrence, "Kill! Kill! And you will make no mistake. Lawrence is the hotbed and should be thoroughly cleansed, and the only way to cleanse is to kill!" Kill they did. But the first point to be noted about Quantrill's speech is that he sounds a lot like John Brown. The second is that it was the Abolitionists years before who had cried, "War! War to the knife and the knife to the hilt!" The murderousness of Quantrill cannot completely cover up the violent gnosticism of the Abolitionists.

But to engage even imaginatively with such tangled and bloody material is to engage also with a second order of mythology, for the story of Quantrill and his men has long since been treated, not always obliquely, in the movies. Because the Younger, James, and Dalton brothers rode with Quantrill's raiders, "Quantrill" is frequently cited in Hollywood Westerns still recycling on cable. There has been no remotely truthful treatment of Quantrill on celluloid, as far as I know, and that's a lack that may someday be supplied. Nevertheless, on screen Quantrill is always represented as a "heavy," though physically he was young and slender, unlike Walter Pidgeon, Brian Donleavy, Leo Gordon, or Emile Meyer, who portrayed him. His name on screen seems to mean what it should—"going too far," "crossing the line." Not many remember *Quantrell's* [sic] Son (1914), but some may recall through a haze of association with Raisinets and popcorn *Dark Command* (1940), *Renegade Girl* (1946), *Kansas Raiders* (1950), *Red Mountain* (1951), *The Woman They Almost Lynched* (1952), *Quantrill's Raiders* (1958), *Young Jesse James* (1960), *Arizona Raiders* (1965), and *Ride a Wild Stud* (1969).

Edward Leslie provides an ironic account of the premier of *Dark Command* in Lawrence in 1940, but then in modern America any attempt to remember the past is ironic even when naive. Yet Hollywood's invasion of Lawrence was a notable massacre of the historical imagination and of the truth. That embarrassment of a movie is a reversal of experi-

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ence, but why blame Hollywood? Americans prefer lies. "John Wayne, playing a fictional town marshal, learns of Quantrill's planned raid at the last moment, sends the women and children to hide in the courthouse, rallies the menfolk, has barricades thrown up, and directs the slaughter of bushwhackers as they ride down the main street. The town is burned, but only one or two male residents are killed. Wayne chases down the fleeing Quantrill and kills him." In other words, the movie about the Lawrence massacre denies that the massacre ever happened, and the bad guy is killed by the good guy with an assist from the bad guy's mother. This happy ending suggests that America has been anxious to deny truth not for reasons of public relations, but because the truth is too terrible to contemplate, for if that truth were confronted squarely, the old conflicts and grievances might reassert themselves, and the old lies might be exposed.

But that movie was not enough. To add insult to injury, John Wayne, Roy Rogers, Gabby Hayes, Gene Autry, and others paraded in Lawrence at the premiere, and a reenactment of the "Burning of Lawrence" was mounted to the delight of thousands. Lawrence had in effect cooperated in effacing its own past while pretending to recreate it, in a miniature of our national obsession. Such repression and transference might have impressed even Sigmund Freud, if he had not died the year before.

Hollywood did not initiate the whitewashing—far from it. Frank James and Cole Younger, those veterans of violence, lived to become charming geezers whose byword was denial. In 1903, they got together to mount a Wild West show, beating Hollywood to the punch. And Quantrill's men continued to have genteel reunions until 1929, by which time the Western had been institutionalized as a displaced substitution for the national memory of fratricidal strife. The name "Quantrill" still sneaks in among all the chivalrous paladins wearing silk shirts, as though to remind us that violence is violence, after all. And perhaps the brutality and vanity and even fraud of Quantrill may remind us as well that our history is replete with shame and even horror which no amount of reverential rhetoric can quite gloss over. The populist mythology that made a folk hero of Jesse James in dime novels and bad movies had its base in something real, but the little boys in the backyards of 50 years ago did not quite understand what they played with or at: "Bang bang, you're dead." W.R. Burnett wrote the novel on which *Dark Command* was based—the same Burnett who wrote *Little Caesar* and *High Sierra*, glorifying urban violence and outlawry in a strong tradition that still packs them in at the multiplex.

So Quantrill is not forgotten, nor is he going to be, thanks in part to Schultz and Leslie, and thanks as well to Quantrill himself, who succeeded in securing notoriety if not fame by violating so many prohibitions and transgressing so flagrantly upon the bounds of human decency. Schultz sees Quantrill as a sociopath; Leslie has a more ironic, even absurdist view; and both are persuasive. Schultz, by the way, makes the error of mistaking General Henry McCollough (the Confederate general who ordered Quantrill's arrest in 1864) for his brother Benjamin (who was killed at Elkhorn Tavern in 1862). His is a censorious account. Leslie's is expansive and pursues the story of Quantrill's remains perhaps further than it deserves. Even so, both show the context that allowed Quantrill to rise however falsely as a partisan in a conflict of reckless ferocity. Perhaps Quantrill's name survives simply to nominate a transgressor, and if that is so, then Quantrill succeeded in his aims. But behind his violence are the shadows of the Abolitionists and the Jayhawkers, and the Union Army and the federal government as well. In what was truly civil war, he exposed the truth we do not want to acknowledge, the truth that no memorial can hide—the truth about the bloody-minded Jacobins who insisted on violence, on war, on a blasphemous crusade which is the basis of our law, mythology, and government today. No wonder Hollywood was nervous about Quantrill, for his story, telescoping red and black and white, North and South and West, is a reproach to our nation and to our complacency—to any easy assumptions of Southern honor or Northern virtue. Going beyond good and evil is not easy to routinize as digestible entertainment. Not many customers want to be reminded in the theater of what they ignore every day, nor do many Americans want to face the implications of the antinomian, millenialist, radically egalitarian rhetoric most recently displayed in Bill Clinton's second inaugural address. It is somehow easier to deprecate the Confederate flag and then watch somebody getting shot on television. Nevertheless, to the credit of Schultz and Leslie, individual readers will be powerfully shown some nasty truths about American history, and perhaps reminded as well of Nietzsche's insight: "He who fights with monsters should be careful lest he thereby become a monster. And if thou gaze long into an abyss, the abyss shall also gaze into thee." C

LIBERAL ARTS

STAY ON THE ISLAND

According to a report cited in the March edition of *The Family in America*, a publication of The Rockford Institute, Puerto Rican women who come to the United States are more, not less, likely than those who remain on the island to become pregnant and bear a child out of wedlock.

The report, written by Nancy S. Landale and Susan M. Hauan and published in *Demography*, calls into question the common assumption that immigrants have a strong sense of traditional family values. According to the authors, "fully .41 [percent] of never-married U.S. born women living in the United States had made the transition to intercourse. Similarly, the proportion experiencing intercourse by age 17 was high [.35 percent] for first-generation migrants to the United States."

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Authenticity and Opportunity

by Paul Gottfried

Heidegger
by David E. Cooper
London: Claridge Press; 94 pp.

◆

David Cooper has written a first-rate introduction to the life and thought of Martin Heidegger. Despite the brevity of his work, Cooper has packed into it a biographical sketch of Heidegger, a discussion of *Being and Time* (1927) and of Heidegger's other interwar and postwar writings, an appraisal of interpretive literature dealing with his subject's involvement with the Nazis, and a concluding bibliographical essay. One marvels at the lean graceful prose and the breadth of learning revealed in this text. Heideggerian terminology—e.g., *Sein, Dasein, Sein in der Welt, Sorge,* and *Zuhandensein*—is clarified and illustrated, and Cooper shows the architectonics of Heidegger's anthology by helping the reader to understand its conceptual points of reference. He also underscores the degree to which Heidegger associated the understanding of existence and existents with the situation of being rooted. For Heidegger philosophical understanding did not proceed from being a disinterested spectator, gazing at life from outside. It came with the precondition of being *beheimatet*, situated within a specific cultural and communal horizon.

Cooper notes the centrality of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology in leading Heidegger toward this view. Heidegger's mentor at Freiburg, Husserl had stressed the need to reconstruct the science of knowledge around structured meditation on the essential aspects of knowing. Through his epistemic method Husserl hoped to separate the accidental and fleeting from the permanent parts of perception, and this would occur through a complicated process of bracketing (*epoché*). For Husserl and for Heidegger cognition involved intentionality, a deliberate privileging of particular sensory data by the percipient: a sound epistemology, for Husserl would, moreover, aim at understanding the internal structure of will and mind operating behind each perception.

Heidegger accepted the notion of intentionality, but believed that Husserl was engaging in "erroneous subjectivizing" by looking to his own consciousness for philosophic answers. Instead, Heidegger thought, he should have focused on the integral relation between the subject and the subject's condition of being. Heidegger transferred the concept of intentionality to an ontological context and proceeded to look at the unfolding of life as "being in the world." What had to be bracketed were not the abstract extrapolations of our thinking but what Heidegger saw as the conditions for our acting in the world: understanding, fallenness into being, and situatedness (*Befindlichkeit*). These, for Heidegger, are the "existentiala" that define our interpersonal engagements; and, rather than approaching life as detached rational beings, we necessarily pursue existence (Heidegger insists in *Being and Time*) as bearers of "care" (*Sorge*). Once hurled into the world we can make sense of it only while being rooted in human relations and living with collective commitments.

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Cooper observes that Heidegger's reconstruction of phenomenology into an existential ontology both prefigured and strengthened his turning toward the radical right. A critic of rationalism and individualism, Heidegger gravitated toward movements stressing both cultural rootedness and an aversion to modernity. His German Catholic and at least derivatively peasant background nurtured this antimodernism, although Cooper properly warns against the facile connection made by one Heidegger debunker, Victor Farias, between the philosopher's Swabian Catholic upbringing and his later support for Hitler.

On the whole, Cooper deals fairly with Heidegger's early enthusiasm for Hitler. Cooper cites philosophical and moral positions that might have made Heidegger receptive to the new German regime, such as his known hatred for modern technology combined with the naive belief that Nazism was about a return to premodern peasant life. But Cooper also underlines two points that, in my opinion, need to be stressed in discussions of this kind: that neither Heidegger's traditionalism nor his ontological restatement of phenomenology has a necessary connection to Nazism, and that most of his hobnobbing with the Nazis resulted from professional ambitions.

Heidegger later inveighed against nuclear warfare and ecological contamination, but this should not be seen as a mere extension of his existential thought proceeding from the 20's. Throughout his life Heidegger had a marvelous facility to adapt what Jürgen Habermas calls "the vocabulary of authenticity" to political opportunities. After the collapse of Nazism he sought rehabilitation through a kind of alliance with the anti-American European left. By the 50's, *Les Temps Modernes* and other European leftist magazines were publishing Heidegger on the dangers of nuclear war and American cultural and economic imperialism. Needless to say, the left's love affair with Heidegger was doomed despite the best efforts to keep it alive by Jean-Paul Sartre and, more recently, Richard Rorty. Though Heidegger turned furiously against American commerce and nuclear arsenals, his philosophy was, as Cooper describes it, a profoundly antimodernist one.

This leads to a final point that Cooper does not address. Given the material he does cover in his short study, it might be asking too much that he deal with this too. But in a series devoted to conservative thinkers (as this one, "Thinkers of Our Time," is), it would be reasonable to ask: What influence does or should Heidegger have on the current intellectual right? Undoubtedly he has had a certain impact, if we limit our observations to the European postmodern right. Among those who, like the French and Italian New Right, challenge the concept of human rights and emphasize cultural particularities, Heidegger's critique of modernity and existential defense of rootedness have a place of honor. But on this side of the Atlantic, Heideggerian thinking has even less currency on the right than on the left. Both neoconservatives and the Christian—particularly the Catholic—right hate Heidegger, one group condemning him as a German rightist who attacked the Enlightenment and the other decrying him as an "atheist" and historicist. And the American right, from neoconservative Allan Bloom to Catholic traditionalists Thomas Molnar and Gerhart Niemeyer, view Heidegger as a particularly *influential* and sinister figure, one whose legion of disciples must be daily combated.

In my view, Heidegger does have value as a social critic and philosopher, but it is necessary to contextualize his thought while attempting to apply it. One simply cannot accept the grandiose claims that Heidegger makes for himself, or his extravagant demand that we treat the Socratic turn in Western thought as a costly derailment. Heidegger's value should be seen in his critical relation to the Enlightenment and rationalism and in his elaboration of the intuitions of earlier philosophers, particularly Schelling, Nietzsche, and Husserl. His own insistence on the situatedness of thinking must be applied to him as well. Heidegger was not a pre-Socratic Greek returned as a Swabian peasant, but a postromantic romantic, resurrecting and refining 19th- and early 20th-century European thought.

Postmodern traditionalists who invoke Heidegger against technicism and managerial ideologies should be honest about their own project. They have not really set out to extirpate the Enlightenment root and branch or to return philosophy to 13th-century Paris or to fifth-century B.C. Athens. They have incorporated Heidegger's thought selectively in constructing a particular critique. And there is good reason that this incorporation be selective. One should not have to swallow all of Heidegger's ideas, expressed over a 40-year period, to recognize the merits of some of them. I myself find much to learn from Heidegger's interwar philosophizing but less from his postwar work, much of which seems full of posturing and deliberate obscurity. Rather than slavish devotees, the corpus of his work should elicit *qualified* admiration, and while we can profit from his criticism of rationalists, this should not obscure the fact that we and Heidegger have been influenced by the Age of Reason and by older traditions of reasoned discourse. We do not have to reject all of the thinking of Hume, Kant, and Hobbes, or Plato and Aristotle, to appreciate Heidegger's critical stance toward liberalism and "erroneous subjectivizing." Cooper believes that Heidegger demands from us this either/or choice, which is one that Victor Farias, Allan Bloom, and other anti-Heideggerians also wish to have us make. Nonetheless, it is not one that is necessary in order to extract what is useful and perceptive in Heidegger.

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At Home in the World

by Gregory McNamee

A Place in Space: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Watersheds
by Gary Snyder
Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint Press; 272 pp., $15.00

Mountains and Rivers Without End
by Gary Snyder
Washington, D.C.: Counterpoint Press; 176 pp., $20.00

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Gary Snyder's new books *A Place in Space*, a collection of essays and talks, and *Mountains and Rivers Without End*, a cycle of poems, are of a piece. Both summarize more than 40 years of writing on literary, environmental, and

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social concerns. Both speak to causes that Snyder—in the familiar personae of walker and hitchhiker, forester and trail worker, anarchist evangelist and sometime Zen monk—has made his own in a distinguished body of work, most famously his 1974 book *Turtle Island*. Both forge an aesthetic of wildness finding beauty in landscapes, many of them remote from us in space and time.

At the heart of the two books lies a sort of cosmic ecology based on ideas of bioregionalism, on environmentalist and Buddhist notions of interconnectedness. The unity of all things is a given to ecologists, who are used to talking about such matters as rock cycles and food chains, and Snyder does not add much to the discussion of a point that is now very near to received wisdom. But on bioregionalism Snyder, as often before, has much to say. He echoes the 19th-century Western explorer John Wesley Powell, who urged that the federal government divide the lands beyond the Mississippi along the region's watersheds in which "cities and dams," as Snyder says in one essay, "are ephemeral and of no more account than a boulder that falls in the river." Cities and dams have been far more significant than that in the history of the West, but Snyder dismisses them as temporary aberrations, and he goes on to propose an ecologically based politics in which places like Arizona, California, and Wyoming would give way to Sonoran, Sierran, and Wind River ecosystems governed by freeholders on the land.

If this seems utopian, Snyder does not mind, and in any event human concerns are for him secondary to the larger claims of nature. The best essays in *A Place in Space* and the most compelling lines in *Mountains and Rivers Without End* are simple evocations of ponderosa pine trees and highland rivulets, of coyotes and cougars, celebrations of the nonhuman world. And even at that, Snyder manages to find beauty in unexpected places, as in "the calligraphy of lights on the night / freeways of Los Angeles."

A long-standing theme of Snyder's is the need to take a long view of history, as he proposes in his lyrical poem "Old Woodrat's Stinky House." In that poem, Snyder observes that human spoken languages endure for only about 500 years (Middle English to Elizabethan; Elizabethan to Modern English), the life span of a Douglas fir. Such an understanding of the way things work, Snyder suggests, grants trees—and mountains, and rivers—a new importance that will, he hopes aloud in several essays, be reflected in a new economics. ("Long-range self-interest would realize . . . that deforestation today does not create jobs for the future.") For the present, Snyder argues that the loss of biological complexity, diversity, and stability that accompanies economic development is a far greater threat than mere pollution, or even overpopulation. Here he sounds less like John Wesley Powell than Aldo Leopold and, by turns, Edward Abbey.

Fashionable jeremiads on such matters—Bill McKibben's *The End of Nature*, for one—have made the best-seller lists, but Snyder does not trade in alarmism. He is instead guardedly optimistic, noting that "the possibility of saving, restoring, and wisely using the bounty of wild nature is still with us in North America." His long view extends to the future as well as to the past; indeed, it is surprising to see in essays written in the 1960's how prescient Snyder was in anticipating the "technology of communication, education, and quiet transportation" that now drives the nascent Information Age, and in predicting that environmental issues would be of central importance to end-of-the-century local and national politics.

At several points in *A Place in Space* Snyder returns to another favorite subject: the close study of places in the landscape in order to understand how they work and thus make a real home. "There are specific things to be learned," he writes, "from each bird, plant, and animal—a natural system is a total education—and this learning is moral, as well as being useful for survival. The red-tailed hawk teaches us to have a broad view of things, while not missing the stirring of a single mouse."

As in the work of Robinson Jeffers, in Snyder's eyes hawks—and mountains, and rivers—are what matter in the long view. Human beings do not often turn up in these pages, where Snyder is usually too busy talking about cosmic affairs—"inhumanism"—to deal much with living, breathing people. When these do appear, however, they are often memorable. One of the best moments in *A Place in Space* is Snyder's affectionate portrait of the Japanese Buddhist poet and farmer Nanao Sakaki, who, among other things, has spent more time wandering around the deserts of Arizona and California than have most Americans. When a prominent traditional Buddhist priest boasted to Sakaki of his spiritual genealogy, Sakaki countered, "I need no lineage; I am desert rat." For wanderers like Sakaki who seek to be equally at home in the world that lies beyond the city, Snyder's books are useful, if idealistic, guides.

Gregory McNamee's most recent book is A Desert Bestiary, *published by Johnson Books in Boulder, Colorado.*

When the Blind Study Art

by Thomas Fleming

Music and Musicians in Ancient Greece
by Warren D. Anderson
Ithaca: Cornell University Press; 248 pp., $35.00

Desmond Dupre (for many years the lutanist of the Deller Consort) used to say that the lute was to the 17th century what the harpsichord was to the 18th century, the spinet to the 19th, and the gramophone to our own age. Americans listen to music (or the synthetic equivalent) all day long, but few of us play our own music, and if we do, it is either because we hope to make a living some day playing thrash guitar on strings pre-tuned to an E chord, or because we have bound our children to a Japanese cult-leader named Suzuki.

What music meant to the Greeks, we can scarcely conceive of it, even those of us who in the course of a day are forced to endure the sound of the Beatles from the girls' room, Nine Inch Nails from the boys', a Clementi sonatina from the piano in the living room, and, from the kitchen radio, DJs Bob and Bill quarreling over the imagined merits of Gary Grafman's mechanical performance of Prokofiev's 3rd piano concerto.

For the Greeks, *Mousike* (sc. *techne*) was the art presided over by the Muses, and although the term might be applied broadly enough to signify what some people mean by "the arts," it was more typically restricted to the preeminent

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Greek art of singing words to the accompaniment to some form of lyre or *aulos* (a wind, usually reed instrument). Greeks sang at weddings and funerals, at athletic games and religious festivals, at dinners and drinking parties. They composed songs to worship their gods, to honor their heroes, to praise their friends, and—it goes without saying—to confess their love. Erotic passion was not, however, their only theme: "O! know, sweet love, I always write of you, / And you and love are still my argument."

Alcaeus (one of the greatest lyric poets) would not have known what to do with Shakespeare's Petrarchan commonplace. He wrote of love, true, but he also wrote of war and politics and the pleasures of drinking and plotting revolution with his friends (subjects much more congenial to a man in his prime). If asked what the subject of poetry was, he might have answered "all of life," an answer which, in fairness, Shakespeare could also have given.

What we vaguely call the lyric poems of Sappho and Anacreon, as well as the choral lyric poems of Pindar and the Greek dramatists, were in fact songs. In this sense, Aeschylus' *Oresteia* comes closer to being an opera than a play (the earliest operas were composed as recreations of ancient music-drama), and some (although by no means all) of the nonsense that has been written about Greek tragedy comes from the failure to treat the lyric sections as musical texts. It is easy to forget this fact, because—apart from a phrase or two of Euripides—the music of Greek lyric poetry is lost, probably irretrievably.

Alas, the entire corpus of surviving Greek musical texts can be printed in a very slim volume, including the learned commentaries which almost never succeed in explaining anything except to the handful of scholars who already have written on the subject. To most classical scholars, including those who write on lyric and dramatic poetry, ancient music is a closed book; and, if I may be allowed a personal comment, after 30 years of desultory efforts to pry the book open, I can safely say that my own fingers are stuck securely into the chapters on rhythm.

The problem is fairly obvious: How does one deal with a tradition of technical theory, when there is virtually no body of evidence to practice on? Imagine a disembodied intelligence trying to understand Aristotle's biological works on a world without animal or vegetable life? Borges has a story about one of the Arab commentators on Aristotle trying to understand the *Poetics*. Baffled by the terms "tragedy" and "comedy," he concludes they are something like the little shows put on to entertain a caravan.

To make things worse, the study of Greek music—including the so-called "science of metrics"—has attracted some of the least stable intelligences in the history of scholarship. Occasionally, however, a major scholar has taken the time to interpret these mysteries to the profane: Boeckh and Wilamowitz on rhythm and meter (and, more recently, Jean Irigoin at the Sorbonne and Bruno Gentili and his students at the University of Urbino), Winnington-Ingram on music theory and notation, Egert Pöhlmann and Andrew Barker on the ancient texts. Useful general works have been produced, in recent years, by Annemarie Neubecker, the late Giovanni Comotti, and M.L. West.

For the study of ancient music, however, America has been, for the most part, a wasteland. The best-known American scholar to tackle Greek music is Warren D. Anderson, whose *Ethos and Education in Greek Music* examined the use of music in ancient education as well as the more theoretical discussions of the philosophers. In his latest book, *Music and Musicians in Ancient Greece*, Anderson has moved away from theory to confront "the ways in which lyre and kithara, aulos and harp and percussion—sounding alone or joined with the human voice—had a place in Greek life." Beginning with the archeological record of European music in the Stone Age, Anderson quickly goes on to survey the depictions of musical instruments and performances in the Greek Bronze Age and in the Dark Age that followed the Trojan War and the collapse of the Mycenean citadels. He proceeds to a discussion of the literary evidence provided by Homer, the archaic lyric poets, and the writers of the fifth century, before concluding with Plato and Aristotle.

Anderson's book is not meant to be a handbook, but it contains, perhaps, as much information as even a classically trained reader can bear. The descriptions of musical instruments is meticulous, and his review of archeological evidence is careful and sometimes illuminating. His treatment of the literary evidence is, on the whole, less satisfactory.

Throughout his work, Anderson sticks to the archeological evidence, wherever possible, in preference to the literary or traditional evidence. In many cases this is wise, but as an *a priori* assumption it is a mistake to assume that a vase-painter, for example, would have a better grasp of musical technology than a poet (and composer). His uncertain grasp of Greek literary traditions leads him, time after time, into making unwarranted conjectures. On the basis of the very small part of Alcman's work to survive, he attributes to the Spartan poet an "unusual interest in the quality of the singing voice" which he uses as the basis for intruding Alan Lomax's sometimes zany correlations between the singing style and cultural attitudes. (For some reason, the idea of Alan Lomax as a scholar strikes me as hilariously funny. The one time I met him he was drunkenly proclaiming solidarity with the oppressed peoples of the world. "My daddy used to tell me that us Lomaxes were nothing but white trash," etc. etc., all for the benefit of the black revolutionaries who were present, encouraging him with the usual, "That's right. You tell it, Alan.") Anderson then concludes that Spartan girls might have had shrill voices, because "wellborn Spartan girls in Alcman's day unquestionably lived under strict constraints."

Unquestionably? I have absolutely no idea of the kind of constraints under which Spartan girls lived in the time of Alcman (the seventh century B.C.). This was a period before the Spartan regime had fully solidified, but even in the fifth century, other Greeks were troubled by the freedom allowed to Spartan women. This is only one of many examples of a free-and-easy approach to literary evidence. Unfortunately, Anderson is not much better in dealing with the technical side of Greek rhythm: he even quotes, from the worst book ever published on Greek meter (by Halporn, Ostwald, and Rosenmeyer), a passage on Pindar in which the authors (actually, only Rosenmeyer) reveal they cannot tell the difference between meter and rhythm, a distinction that is comparatively trivial in spoken verse but of vital importance when one is dealing with music and music theory.

Anderson's inability to handle Greek literature is not idiosyncratic; rather it is illustrative of a wider problem. Specialists in material evidence, (e.g., archeologists, epigraphers, paleoanthropologists)

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are frequently deluded into thinking that a catalogue of bones, potsherds, and graves constitutes some kind of history. Without the written evidence of narrative history, legal cases, and literature, we can have very little idea of another civilization. Where such records exist, of course, archeology can be enormously useful in solving problems, but where there is no literature—as in the Greek "Dark Ages"—the results are very much like the blind man's impression of an art gallery. The real danger, however, comes when technologues go from the reassuringly solid evidence of bones and relics and try to interpret evidence of another kind—the records of the human mind and spirit. Here their incapacity is not the ignorance of the blind man in the art gallery but the blind man in the mine field, and all their learning becomes mere information of the type that destroys knowledge.

Thomas Fleming is the editor of Chronicles.

A Bronx Collage

by Jacob Neusner

Unfinished People: Eastern European Jews Encounter America
by Ruth Gay
New York: W.W. Norton;
310 pp., $27.50

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Forty years ago in *Commentary*, Ruth Gay created the American Jewish essay as an art form of dignity and eloquence, and in this wonderful book she brings her life's work to its glorious climax in a sustained statement of remarkable purity. In the beginning, she took the raw materials of everyday life as lived by New York Jews and turned them into art—a verbal collage, really—that captured ordinary lives, while ennobling and dignifying them. (All this in a memorable essay on the Jewish delicatessen in the Bronx.) No one had written that way before, but many have tried—few with equivalent success—since.

In her new book, she portrays two generations of New York Jews: the immigrants of the beginning of this century, and their children of the middle years. What makes her writing remarkable is not just its sensitivity for evocative detail, its ability to suggest large thoughts through humble observation. It is the absence of nostalgia and sentimentality, the lack of cheapness, and the refusal to take the easy way out. Respecting her subject, Gay never patronizes or ridicules. And because her vision penetrates the heart of experience, she is incapable, as always, of condescension.

Conventional treatment of New York Jews—like that of Woody Allen, the most eloquent and ferocious Judaism-hater of our day—demeans them. Or else it patronizes them through implausible idealization. Here, by contrast, we have a sustained account of the life of an immigrant milkman and his family in the Bronx: a life of near-penury and perpetual insecurity, but one of dignity and humanity—and holiness—withal.

In many ways the book is a mirror image of the other classic on the immigrant experience and that of their children, Oscar Handlin's *The Uprooted*: the starting point for sustained historical research that Handlin himself pioneered. He announced then that he had set out to write the story of immigration to America, but found out that immigration *was* the story of America. Then in general terms, pertinent to every group, he told the tale of the immigrants and their struggle. Gay tells the same story—about Jews in the Bronx. It bears the same charge of universal interest: the particulars conveying the universal picture.

The book begins with a brief account of immigrant origins in Eastern Europe and ends by reflecting upon their experience, and that of their children, in the New World. Eastern European Jewry today is idealized, and even—owing to the emotionalism engendered by the literature of the holocaust—canonized. Gay shows the poverty, misery, and hopelessness produced by economic disaster and political catastrophe after the dissolution of Poland by Russia, Austria, and Germany that persuaded millions of people, most of them teenagers, to escape to Godless America. The shank of the book covers subjects of quotidian interest providing the occasion for profound reflection.

Ruth Gay is a woman of remarkable wisdom, which is why her book works so well. She sees much, and understands more. Throughout, she gives us insight into the traits of intensity, toughness, and candor that marked New York Jewish life.

Gay also shows the underside of candor, the brutality and chaos of human relationships, explaining why those of us born and brought up in more genteel settings and brought to New York by reason of education found life in that city at once attractive and revolting. When, from a Yankee suburb of what was then a white Protestant state capital, I came, via Harvard and Oxford, to the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, I entered a world in which everyday human relationships were brutal, envy undisguised, and gentility rare. A son of the third generation, I did not know what to make of New York Jews, who flourished in intense contention. In those days I found solace in the study of Abraham Heschel, an immigrant and a theological model, who found that world equally puzzling by reason of a quite different upbringing. He came out of the nobility of Judaism, and I came looking for that same Judaism: the one viewing with pity the works of prior immigrants and their children, the other the embodiment of Jewish immigrant life in quest of something beyond the wilderness that two generations of immigrant Jews had wrought.

Being an immigrant made for a tough life. But being an immigrant's child presented even more intractable problems to work out. Ruth Gay makes of the encounter between generations and cultures a remarkable and ennobling story, and a well-told one besides.

Jacob Neusner is Distinguished Research Professor of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida, Tampa, and author, most recently, of The Price of Excellence: Universities in Conflict During the Cold War Era *(Continuum).*

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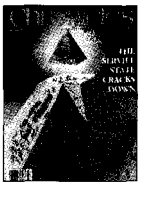
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Letter From Batavia

by Bill Kauffman

A Well-Preserved Woman

◆

My wife is president of our county's landmark society, and though my inability to tell a cornice from a frieze renders me a hapless consort in matters architectural—more Denis Thatcher than Hillary Clinton—I am nonetheless proud of her. For preservation seems to me far less an aesthetic ruffle than an emotional and spiritual necessity.

"Preservation" suggests to some a band of fastidious dowagers tidying up the houses of long-dead great men, polishing the silver and keeping off-limits the maid's chambers and slave quarters. This is part of it, and a worthwhile part, too: among our family's more embarrassing perversions is visiting the homes of the Presidents—I highly recommend the Warren G. Harding home in Marion, Ohio, abode of the best chief executive of this century. On the other hand, preserving the castles of the robber barons, or the dens of iniquity that domiciled the liars and mass murderers who have played so prominent a role in public life over the last 50 years, is a waste of effort. Preserving the boyhood home of, say, Robert McNamara, makes no more sense than memorializing the playgrounds of the youthful Jeffrey Dahmer.

Preservation in a small community is something much different. Our landmark society rightly honors the couple that restored the grand manse of the bleak turn-of-the-century industrialist who killed the man he found in bed with his wife—and was acquitted in the blink of an eye, in the 1884 version of the O.J. Simpson trial. (Saith the *New York Times* after the acquittal: "Rowell now goes free on a verdict which is so singularly ridiculous that the whole affair is calculated to place American justice in anything but a pleasing light." *Plus ça change* and all that.)

But our society also honors, through video presentations and awards and a magnificent book, the less grand but more inspiriting homes and churches and shops within which life has been lived, and the daily made sacred, for two centuries. My wife and the rest of the landmark society (of which I am a sluggish director) know that the story of a town cannot be understood by a quick visit to the mansion on the hill.

When I walk the streets of my hometown of Batavia, New York, every building carries with it a fund of meaning and memory that can never be duplicated or replaced. There is the corner store in which I bought the Buffalo and Batavia papers for my grandfather every afternoon; here is the house in which I used to drink beer and play cards with my friends till the wee hours; there is the bleacher in which I sat with my parents and brother cheering our professional baseball team; this is the church in which we made our first communion.

But what happens when these buildings are gone? The memories remain, but the corporeal evidence of a life lived disappears, and we become as ghosts, strangers flitting through a strange land. Many of us leave, because our anchorage is no longer visible. When the signposts of our lives vanish, it does not make much difference where we live. One place is the same as the next—not hostile to our residence, but merely indifferent.

When I was a boy, the men who ran my city begged the federal government for urban renewal money, which they then used to knock down her core. In a very real sense they killed my city, and for years I despised them. But I have come to see that they were neither venal nor stupid: they had simply bought into the lie that Progress—by which her publicists mean the destruction of the past—is inevitable, and that those who resist "change" (which is seldom natural but almost always the result of intervention by governments or unaccountable corporations) are musty relics, doomed to extinction or, even worse, irrelevance.

To raze an edifice made venerable by time and life is as grave an act of desecration as toppling a tombstone. Nitwit teenagers, fired by booze, occasionally run riot through the Old Batavia Cemetery, kicking over markers as thoughtlessly as a mower scalps grass. They are, in effect, spitting on our forbears, but haven't they had the best teachers: us? We removed the capstones, we kicked out the fundament, we erased the signs and markers that our ancestors had so carefully constructed for their heedless posterity. Wasn't urban renewal—or "slum clearance," as it was known in some cities, the racist implication being that the blacks and Italians would be swept away on a broom of federal dollars—merely the grown-ups going on their own headstone-toppling rampage, in broad daylight no less?

If you believe, as I do, that the dead are with us always, then preservation is the joyful duty commanded by love and piety. It enriches us as it honors our ancestors. A building carries within the ghosts of all who have walked its floors and run its stairs. Someday we, too, will be footfalls, grateful to those who preserve our old haunts.

Bill Kauffman is the author, most recently, of America First! *This piece will also appear in* The Family in America, *published by The Rockford Institute.*

Foreign Correspondences

by William Mills

Bulgarian Autumn, Part II

◆

For travelers drawn to the cradles of civilization, Bulgaria offers a good alternative to the crowds of Greece. One can revel in the Greek and Roman occupations that followed the Thracians. Moreover, while civilization was having a rough go later on in the western Roman empire, matters were quite different in the eastern Roman Empire, or what we now call the Byzantine Empire, and examples of Byzantine art and architecture are abundant in Bulgaria. Early, Middle, and Late Byzantine churches can all be found in the coastal town of Nesebăr (Mesambria). The Old Metropolitan

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was likely built during or shortly after the reign of Justinian (Early Byzantine), the Church of St. John the Baptist around 1000 (Middle), and St. John Aleiturgitos around 1325 (Late). All of these are within a few blocks of each other.

One of the highlights of Bulgaria is Bačkova monastery, a few miles outside of Plovdiv, which is in the middle of the country. The foundations of some of the buildings were laid in the 11th century, and as is so often the case, situated in beautiful mountainous surroundings. The founder was a naturalized Armenian from Georgia and either Quarter Master General or else Commander-in-Chief in the Byzantine army. His name is rendered variously as Gregori Pakourianos, Boukiani, or Bakuriani. Although business in the empire was transacted in Greek, Bakuriani insisted that Georgian be the language of the liturgy and even of everyday use. Furthermore, no Greek person was to be admitted to the community.

Inside the enceinte, or surrounding fortress-like walls, sits the small cathedral which was built in the 16th century. Its pattern is cross-in-square, unusual in Bulgaria I am told, with a dome over the crossing supported by four pillars. Coming out of the church I saw a monk and asked, through the two students of English from Plovdiv who accompanied me, if I could take a picture of him, to which he assented. They explained to him that I could not speak Bulgarian and he asked if I spoke German. We chatted a bit in my limited German, and he told me there were about ten monks living there at the time.

A bit later I met another of them who turned out to be quite a card. He said he came to Bačkova when he was 37 and very ill. He took no pills, but was made well by Christ's Mother. He said he had had numerous visions of her, so many that the other monks scolded him for always praying to her and not to Christ. He also said he was the most photographed monk, although not the best known. Both monks had long black and gray beards, but the second one was the more exotic-looking. Once he began talking, the second monk told us many things. One of their monks, he said, had been seeing women, but God punished him—he was killed in a car wreck. We had also noticed a very slender woman dressed all in black sitting with the abbot on a bench. The second monk told us that she was a poet and artist who stayed here, but was so sensitive that she would not show anyone her work.

What makes the 16th-century date for the building of the cathedral especially noteworthy is that it occurred after the "messengers of God," the Muslim Ottoman Turks, invaded the country in the 14th century and ruled Bulgarians until 1878. In general the Turks were not enthusiastic about encouraging Christians or church-building, but during a respite, they permitted this one at Bačkova. Several Bulgarians told me that Christian churches during the period had to be built so that the cross on top was not noticeable, and that was why some church floors were below ground level.

Prior to the Turkish invasion, during what is known as the Second Bulgarian Empire (1185-1393), Bulgaria had been weakened by almost constant warfare. The Tartars invaded and briefly ruled; later, the Bulgarians had to face simultaneously the Serbs and the Turks. All the war-making led to the increased power of local barons, which in turn led to weak central authority incapable of defense against the ultimate Turkish threat. In 1364 Plovdiv (Philippopolis) fell, and Sofia in 1385. And Bulgarian identity faded into deep shadows.

My two student friends drove me north of Plovdiv to Sopot, the former home of Bulgaria's most famous writer, Ivan Vazov. Besides being a poet, he wrote the classic Bulgarian novel *Under the Yoke*, which is set in preliberation times and dramatizes life under the Turks. Not far from Sopot is Karlovo, the hometown of the country's national hero, Vasil Levski. Levski, who helped organize the national uprising which tried to remove the Turkish yoke, was captured by the Ottoman police and hanged in Sofia.

Soon after the Turks were in full control, some Bulgarians were forcibly converted to the Muslim religion, and there were others who collaborated with the new masters (just as had happened in Serbia during this time). These were rewarded with posts in the administration. Many of these people, called Pomaks, lived in the Rhodope mountains. It was in these beautiful mountains that I was to have some of my most interesting experiences.

I had mentioned to my friend Ivo Hadjimishev, the *Sega* magazine photographer, that I would like to read something by a living writer and then interview him. Because I had heard from

Mr. and Mrs. Haitov.

other Bulgarians about their anxiety regarding the current Pomak "problem," Ivo suggested I read a book of stories called *Wild Tales* by Nikolai Haitov. Thus, as I moved about the country, in the evenings in my hotel rooms I read the stories, all set in the Rhodope mountains, some of them alluding to Pomaks.

Haitov, whom I subsequently interviewed, had been a forester in the Rhodopes and early on (the book was originally published in 1967) had witnessed the environmental damage caused by the government's clear-cutting policies. His stories are full of mountain humor and partly reflect the shepherd's world that had existed for hundreds of years south of the Rhodopes and into what is now Greece. It is Haitov's sense of mutability and fate that deepens the narratives, and for me is reflected in the Bulgarian consciousness as I know it, a consciousness mirroring the historical troubles of these people—invasions, occupations, an existence at the mercy of the neighboring empires, whether Roman, Ottoman, German, or Russian. Typical characters' observations: "Something's bound to happen if there's too much laughter"; "Just an hour running away, and a lifetime trying to get back. And no matter how you try, it's never any good. You never get back to where you first started"; "When your sorrows are too many to bear, it's only the malice that keeps you going." How Balkan, how Bulgarian!

Ivo picked me up in Plovdiv one morning and we drove to Kŭrdzhali about 50 kilometers from the border of Greek Thrace, an area also populated by many Greek Muslims. We went to Kŭrdzhali to meet an Orthodox priest, but a very special one. He had once been a Pomak, but after being at the university, had converted to Christianity. He then returned to the heart of Pomak country and was essentially a missionary to the Muslims. When Ivo had first contacted Ivan Saruev, he said he was not

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sure he wanted to meet an American journalist, because Americans always sided with the Turks. He said he had to think about it. I mentioned that we were having our problems with Muslims, too, that our attitudes were more complex. The United States had suffered the Trade Center bombing, and the Reverend Farrakhan was meeting with our

Ivan Saruev, priest to the Pomaks.

enemies in Libya for some walking-around money for his mosque. Finally he agreed to meet with me.

As a matter of fact, my contact with Muslims had started in my hometown of Baton Rouge. In the 1980's I attended the trial of nine Muslims who had come to teach the "blue-eyed devils" a thing or two, by blockading part of the city, permanently maiming a television journalist, and generally destroying that part of town. Probably they had counted on the Berkeley or Cambridge campus police, but our men in blue had not yet been to crisis management school and did not understand the routine. All nine of the brothers went to prison for a long time. Subsequently, I moved to a small university town in Missouri where the word "union" is not much heard of unless it's the teachers' union, and you can't order a hamburger without mentioning the word "diversity." Here I was greeted with Muslims demonstrating for Ayatollah Khomeini while Americans were held hostage in Iran.

Father Saruev had a muscular build, large hands, and long light-brown hair. We chatted in his modest house in a working neighborhood of town, and drank tea made from several herbs that he had gathered himself on his walks in the mountains. I asked him how he went about his work, right in the middle of Muslim country, and how successful he was. He said he was reasonably successful, considering he was a voice crying out in the wilderness. One thing the communists had done in Bulgaria was educate all classes, including the Gypsies and the Turks. Because of this, they knew about Bulgarian Christian culture, and they knew that the Church had held Bulgarians together after they had been made inferior subjects of the Turks. With this historical background, Father Saruev visits their homes and organizes meetings. One problem is the scarcity of priests. "We need 12,000 to 14,000 priests in Bulgaria and we have only 2,000." He has converted some men to the priesthood and they have built a new church, besides the one that was next to his home.

I asked how the Muslims were reacting to this; he smiled, and said the *hodjas* say he is Enemy Number One. For the moment he is tolerated. I had heard that Turkey was giving help to the Bulgarian Turks, and asked if this was so. "Absolutely. Bulgarian TV is very weak because of the signal over the mountains, and Muslims are helped with their satellite dishes, which cost around $120 for them. They only listen to Turkish TV." But it is not just Turkish help. Missionaries are coming from Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Iran, and Egypt. "They are trying to isolate the Christians." Furthermore, Turkey is stopping its policy of letting Muslim Turks freely emigrate there. At first I thought he meant that Turkey felt it had enough problems without more people, but that was not what was guiding their policy. They wanted to have strong Turkish contingents in other countries. Then the drumbeat could begin for "autonomy." This has already happened across the border in Grecian Thrace. What this can easily lead to, of course, is an excuse to "rescue" their brothers from the oppressors.

During our conversation, Father Saruev mentioned that Valya Balkanska had sung at some of his meetings. Ivo explained to me that she was perhaps the most famous folk singer in Bulgaria and had sung for the state folk group for 30 years. We made arrangements to meet her in Smoljan, which was even closer to the Greek border. The drive through the Rhodopes was breathtaking, and Ivo stopped several times to take pictures. We stopped for coffee in a small town that looked completely Turkish, as was our coffee. Outside I heard the *muezzin* announce the call to prayer, but noticed that the men hanging about in the street made no motion to answer it.

In Smolyan, Ivo pointed out the mountain that Orpheus reputedly had inhabited, an appropriate place for a folk singer to live near. Valya Balkanska looked to be in her 50's, and her hands showed she was accustomed to manual work. She said that her retirement from the state was only 5,000 leva a month (perhaps ten dollars), and she raised a few sheep and cattle at her small mountain farm in order to survive. She said she had converted to Christianity in 1960. For the second time I heard about foreign Muslim missionaries. She said they stood outside the public schools and handed out Muslim literature. (Incidentally, Carl Sagan had chosen from 1,500 submissions a song sung by her to be representative of mankind's strivings after knowledge to go with Voyager 1 and Voyager 2—it's called "Delyu the Rebel.") Other songs that I listened to later included the Bulgarian bagpipe, eerily like that of my own Celtic ancestors; the Celts had made it to Bulgaria in the third century B.C.

On the way back to Sofia, Ivo and I stopped at Batak, where in 1876 Muslim converts slaughtered 5,000 Christians. Today the skulls and bones can be seen in St. Nedelya's Church. Of course, in 1986 the Bulgarians were kicking around the Pomaks, for example back in Kurdzhali. But that's another Balkan story.

The Christian-Muslim conflict is not one that is going to remain remote for Americans, much less for Bulgarians. Already we are seeing this. Unless there can be much clarification about the relationship through dialogue and political action, this conflict will be contested by force of arms. Just as the United States should insist on parity and reciprocity in our trade with Japan, Christians and Jews must insist on parity and reciprocity with Muslims. It's not enough for a Muslim college professor in the United States to point out a message of brotherhood in the Koran, when

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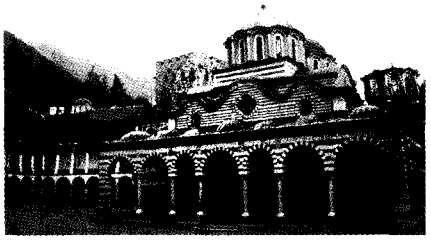

Rila Monastery.

"brotherhood" means only Muslims. What does it mean in the Koran to say, "O you who believe, fight the unbelievers who are near to you," or "Believers! Do not take Jews and Christians for friends"? "Sure they are unbelievers who allege that God is the third of three." What about the chaplains in Kuwait who were forbidden to show any sign of a cross while we were there, even if incidentally, to save them from annihilation? In order to take each other's traditions seriously, each must believe there may be elements in the other's tradition that he can use to understand experiences foreign to him and that he may even be able to incorporate into his own. As things are, religions will remain the servants of politicians and the state, the skin of the war drum. Killing your neighbor may be necessary from time to time, but it is unmanly to use God as an excuse.

I was to make one more swing through part of the south, the first leg to the Rila Monastery, a national shrine to Bulgarians and a necessary pilgrimage for every visitor. Built first in the 10th century and ravaged many times, it was virtually destroyed in the 19th century, and what you see is a restoration. Here and elsewhere in Bulgaria, I was reminded how popular St. George was, represented in frescos and icons: the patron saint of soldiers, which is especially meaningful in the Balkans. King Boris III, monarch until 1945, is buried here. His son King Simeon currently lives in Spain, but has returned recently to visit his father's grave.

Back in Sofia, I did something I said I was not going to do: I ate at the new McDonald's. Feeling rushed, I raced in, and before I could pick up my order, the young man waiting on me asked how he could get to the States. Back in Plovdiv, the two university students talked with pessimism about their chances of getting work when they graduated. One of them had already been to Germany working as a manual laborer. As many as can leave to find work, to escape the economic and social hard times. This has happened before, following the collapse of the Second Bulgarian Empire, after the Ottoman collapse (a period known as *kurdjaliistvo*), and now after the communist collapse. Every time, local freebooters have stepped into the vacuum, and during their feuding and pillaging, people have gone to Rumania, to southern Russia, and now, even to the United States. Often these people, especially the younger ones, returned to help restore the country later on. Even now, the university students of Sofia are demonstrating in the streets before Parliament for a new government. Maybe their elders will listen and take the high road. Maybe not.

William Mills is a novelist and poet whose latest work of fiction is Properties of Blood.

Letter From Lagado University

by John N. Frary

The New Overseas Campus

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The inauguration of Lagado University's new campus in Plagho-Plaguo, the capital of Dismailia, is generating great excitement throughout the Diversity Community. As President Bleatley has said, LU's "Semester in Dismailia" is guaranteed to challenge Eurocentric cultural values on every level and at every turn. It centers the Other, presents the Absent, privileges Multiplicity, and promises new perspectives on nearly everything. It would be inappropriate to disparage the diversitarian struggles of other universities, but facts are facts and there is nothing to be gained by deception: its competitors talk the talk, Lagado walks the walk. No other semester abroad offers such a complete escape from Western cultural hegemony, and none even attempt it. The Plagho-Plaguo facility is no Florentine villa, Kentish country house, or Bavarian Schloss. It is not an effete, cocacolarized, postcolonial, pseudo-Eurovenue situated in the cool highlands of some "Lesser Developed Country." Lagado University smashes the mold of the overseas campus. Simply to land on Dismailia's coast is an education in itself. Its flora and climatic conditions resemble nothing seen in Europe or North America since the Lower Carboniferous Epoch. Its dynamic fauna take the traveler into a different world. Its insects are astounding. Its microbes must be experienced to be believed. Impressive as this ecological authenticity is, it is far less important to the Dismailian Experience than the comprehensiveness of Cultural Difference. Here the visitor will discover scarcely a trace or taint of familiar Eurocapitalist materialism. No multinational corporation has ever been tempted by the country's meager, inaccessible resources. Its dense, contradictory, and arcane commercial codes have squelched the enthusiasm of the most adventurous entrepreneurs. The craftiest of Western speculators withdraw, baffled, before the elliptical and enigmatic Dismailian etiquette of official corruption. Apart from a lively and intelligent interest in Uzis, V-61 Skorpions, Kalashnikovs, and M-16s, the population is indifferent to Western consumer goods and amenities. Commodification is so much hocus-pocus for a people whose precapitalist economic transactions are conducted entirely by barter or at gunpoint.

Nor does the country's history bear the stains of colonialist intrusion. The only imperial adventure ever directed its way, the landing by a Royal Bulgarian Army expedition on the Serpent Coast in 1911, ended on its second day when the surviving troops shot their officers and fled across the border into Hocsuntleonis. The few Christian missionaries who ventured into Dismailian territory during the last century were all fricasseed within a fortnight of their arrival. Wholly unspoiled by syncretic accretions, the aboriginal religion displays features unseen in or near Europe since the fall of Nineveh.

The culture is uncorrupted by those neocolonial phenomena which invariably blight the Celebration of Difference in less-favored territories. Visitors will look in vain for "golden arches" on the streets of Plagho-Plaguo. Those desiring fast food must satisfy themselves with the authentic indigenous slugburgers and grilled grubs available on every street corner—during the seasons when they are not under water. Western sports

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have no foothold in Dismailia: the first and last soccer game, in 1948, prompted a civil war which continues to the present day in the remote valleys of the Mordor Range. The country is ignorant of any "Doors" but those hung before the women's lavatories in the Grand Panjandral Palace. No Sinatra or Strauss, neither Bach nor Beatle, can be heard within its borders, but only the wailing of the native nostril-flute ensembles and the bellowing of the bell-and-spigot horn bands, variously accompanied by the flutings of castrati or tormented shrieks of small furry animals. VCRs are unknown. "Boom boxes" are shot on sight.

Plagho-Plaguo is without a foreign presence of any kind. Even the Quai d'Orsay extends no diplomatic tendril to vex the somnolent offices of the Ministry of Infidel Affairs. The only two Anglophones in the population speak varieties of pidgin unintelligible even to each other. The prepotent Dismailian JuJulatric Guild has thwarted all attempts by the greedy and officious Western medical establishment to subvert native therapies and imperil its members' livelihoods. The most hardened anthropologists desert their research projects in revulsion after a few months' exposure to Dismailian customs. In a rare show of Cold War harmony, the KGB and CIA agreed in 1951 to assign Infiltration Priority URANUS to the country, a status it shares only with Antarctica's Ronne Ice Shelf.

Appropriate theoretical strategies are fully developed. The campus is in readiness. All that now remains is to find some people willing to take advantage of the opportunity. It had been assumed that Dr. Kwasiuro Ahrglu-Barghlu, LU's professor of Postcolonial Literature Theory, would be glad to return to his native land to undertake the duties of Dean, but he declines the opportunity with puzzling vehemence. Professor Ahrglu-Barghlu is adamant that his post of multicultural duty is in Kafka, South Dakota, home of LU, where the population requires reorientation away from its arrogant assumptions of Western cultural superiority. The Lagado faculties are showing a sudden and unprecedented burst of scholarly activity which preempts their schedules well into the next millennium. Only professors Lemuel Bungarus of the Herpatology Institute and Hopalong Spong, the English Department's filmist and South Dakota's most devout and outspoken High Church Relativist, have so far been willing to accept positions at the new facility. Assuming the deanship with his customary enthusiasm, Professor Spong left for Plagho-Plaguo early in September, eager to celebrate the Dismailian Difference and full of the will to tolerate. Professor Bungarus followed shortly after with his equipment.

Regrettably, a major problem arose in November when Professor Spong abandoned his position to return home halfway through the semester, a shockingly changed man. A casual glance might overlook the 75 pounds (including three fingers) he had left in Dismailia, but even the most fleeting glimpse could not fail to detect the twitches, the tics and tremors, the abrupt gothic grimaces and chronic spasms that so altered his once bland and cheerful countenance. The appalled attention of his family and social acquaintances was variously fixed on the novel purple-and-puce tint in his hair, the protuberant greenish arabesques that pulsed on his cheeks and forehead, and the fitful yellow lambency in his irises which so excited the Center for Tropical Disease Control; but the deeper horror was left to his colleagues. Although a small thing physically, members of the English Department saw it at once. It filled them with a nameless dread. It was there on his lapel. *An American flag.*

To get Spong to lighten up, his loyal colleagues made the supreme sacrifice: they invited him to present a film and slide show of his stay in Plagho-Plaguo. The event was a disaster. It immediately became clear that the "Ping" Spong whose tolerance and openness to Otherness had been an example to all was no longer among them. Of the man who had often driven hundreds of miles out of his way to experience something new to tolerate, no trace lingered. The pansensitivitarian cosmopolite who would travel across an ocean and a continent at the drop of a fez, sombrero, or kaffiyeh to acquaint himself with perspectives of diverse groups who were busily shredding, burning, or defecating on American flags had been replaced by a crabbed chauvinist.

The changeling's presentation failed to depict a single positive aspect of Dismailian culture. His commentary on that nation's dress, diet, art, architecture, literature, medical profession, government, religion, ethics, and customs was an embarrassing string of slurs, complaints, and sneers interspersed with violent expletives, nasty sniggers, and animal snarls. Every slide and frame, every anecdote, description, and statistic, was represented as further proof that Dismailia was the "litter box of the Cosmos." The litter box of the Cosmos!—an ethnocentric aspersion that the merest laymammal, taken at random from the streets of Kafka, would have recognized immediately as insensitive—and this strange new Spong employed it no fewer than 33 times in a 45-minute talk! Definitely the wrong Spong.

Not even Dismailian wildlife escaped his blanket condemnation. Indeed, a slide of the *Sylvilagus palustris carnivoris* provoked in the lecturer a chattering rage which suggested some association with his missing digits. Members of PETA could not believe their ears. Here was a creature as cute and cuddly as a Panda, a prominent member of the United Nations endangered species list, the only breed of flesh-eating swamp rabbit known to science, and the founder of their Lagado chapter was positively gloating at the prospect of its early extinction. Had they not been intimidated by the New Spong's inflamed mood, they would have walked out in a body.

The worst came at the end when Hopalong Spong turned on the lights, then turned on his colleagues. He furiously denounced the English Department as a nest of heathenish and treasonous perverts, flung his resignation down on the conference table, and stalked off to begin a new career as media director of Real Americans for Jesus Christ the Avenger. His erstwhile colleagues sat in appalled silence as the fanatic's booming rendition of "America the Beautiful" receded down the hallway. Then Harry Glibb summed it up: what had happened was all too clear. Hopalong Spong's diversitarian convictions had failed to stand the test of the Dismailian Difference.

Correctly interpreted, this episode will be understood by theorists as emphasizing the importance of the challenge Dismailia presents to those isolated within the context of American ethnocentrism. It can only increase the Semester in Dismailia's appeal for progressives determined to break free from that context. At the moment, however, it creates a problem. Professor Spong's premature return leaves only Professor Lemuel Bungarus *in situ*. Bungarus has taken over as Dean *pro tempore* and seems quite happy

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to remain in Dismailia, but his almost complete indifference to the country's people and culture—not to mention his loathing for all forms of administrative paperwork—limits his effectiveness in that post. The preferred staffing option would be an Ultramulticultist Collective drawn from the English, Anthropology, and Sociology departments, but President Bleatley's appeal for volunteers continues to be stymied by the amazing number and diversity of diversity projects which require the continued presence of those faculties in the United States. The current student enrollment also gives cause for concern. Of those originally signed up for the Semester in Dismailia, the nontraditional student recruited by Harry Glibb was intercepted at the bus station and returned to the Kafka Alzheimer Center; two Remedial Studies majors got lost in Kafka International Airport and have not yet been recovered; two other enrollees adamantly refused to leave the boat at journey's end; and the whereabouts of the four who reported to the Plagho-Plaguo campus is currently unknown. Enrollment for the spring semester is faltering. In point of fact, it is nonexistent at this writing. The obstinate provincialism of Lagado's undergraduates was perhaps to be expected, but even zealously diversitarian graduate students have been ostentatiously displaying an unwonted fondness for the climate and ambiance of southern South Dakota. It is not surprising that concept should sometimes get ahead of consciousness in an institution as innovative as LU, but this unresponsiveness is still a little disappointing. For the present there seems nothing to be done except to scatter colorful brochures thickly about the library, the lounges, the student center, and especially the locales where the Remedial Studies majors while away their hours, and hope for the best. It is only fair to mention that, out of respect for the Dismailians' intense feelings about cameras, the photographs are actually from St. Kitts, Rio de Janeiro, and Acapulco. They are authentic impressions of how the Publicity Office imagines the local scenes *should* look.

Readers of *Chronicles* who would like to participate in the Dismailian Experience may write to: Stanley Livingston, Decenter Center, Recondite Quad 010, Lagado University, Kafka, South Dakota 06660-1313. Travel expenses will be paid by the Ford Foundation, but there will be a charge for the kevlar jackets. Applicants must allow at least three months to complete the necessary immunizations and vaccinations. Vegetarians should be aware that the Dismailians are exclusively carnivorous and worship tofu as the flesh of their principal deity. Tobaccophobes are advised to be very polite and sensitive when asking the natives not to smoke. They run no risk of being shot—local usage is very strict on this point—but it is prudent to prepare for self-defense against edged weapons. Applicants of female cultural construction would do well to brush up on their sign language. In Dismailia, women are not permitted to talk. This may be a little troubling at first, but they have only to remind themselves from time to time that imposition of colonialist-imperialist cultural hegemonism is a really major No-No. If Sappheminists exercise ordinary discretion when performing necessary personal functions, they may hope to escape this restriction. Available information suggests that the natives have no epistemological frame of reference for assigning them a gender of any kind. Intelligent and informed reproductive choice is facilitated by the right of postnatal abortion, but caution is advised in matters of premarital and extramarital sex. Under provisions of the Code of Gnashnarlh the Merciful, female offenders are sentenced to ten minutes in the Grand Panjandral Snake Pits while males suffer confiscation of their reproductive apparatus. Gays will be glad to know that AIDS is unknown in Dismailia and "gay-bashing," in the literal sense of the term, nonexistent. However, they may wish to reflect whether (with all due respect for the values of the Other) being flayed alive over three days with a flint knife is necessarily to be preferred. Perspective is always important.

Dollars may be exchanged for 7.62mm rounds at the *bureau de change* hovel on the Beach-of-Entry. Bottled water is optional; there will be plenty of kerosene available on campus for water purification. The Omnium Gatherum of People Unwhite is agitating furiously to compel the insurance companies to abandon actuarial computations which can only be racist in origin, but insurance policies may not be available for some time yet. LU will provide the E-Z Legal Forms "Last Will and Testament Do-It-Yourself Kit" free of charge. Passports and visas are not a problem. Dismailia has very few visitors.

John N. Frary is a professor of history at Middlesex County College in Edison, New Jersey.

THE LU/ENGLISH NEWSLETTER

Although Lagado University in Kafka, South Dakota cannot claim the fame of a Yale, Stanford or Berkeley; its English Department does claim to stay abreast of every slash, gash and laceration of the Postmodernist cutting edge. Our motto says it all: "If it's bleeding in New Haven, then it's hemorrhaging in Kafka, South Dakota." Subscribers to the departmental newsletter will find it an unfailingly reliable entrée to the outré. Our faculty stand ever-alert to decant whole hogsheads of inchoate verblobbage over such pustules of coherent thought as may erupt anywhere in the American academy. Subscribe now for your libretto to the Kanondämmerung.

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POLITICS

The Renaissance Weekend

by Ralph R. Reiland

"He was just kidding," our waitress said about her coworker, the sometimes banquet waiter Marcus Burrizon, age 21, who was just hauled away in shackles and leg irons by Secret Service agents. It was "Renaissance Weekend" in Hilton Head, South Carolina, and President Clinton and about 1,600 top achievers were getting together for beach fun-runs and golf when Mr. Burrizon allegedly left a note in the men's room that threatened the President.

"I hate him," said another waiter, an ex-Marine from the Air Station in Beaufort, South Carolina, referring to the President. "I was an air traffic controller at Beaufort. When he pardoned the air traffic controllers who were fired by Reagan for going on strike, that left no job openings for us. If it wasn't for Clinton, I'd be making $82,000 a year."

Arriving at Hilton Head on a sunny afternoon, Clinton missed the Renaissance session on "Moral Compasses for Modern Leaders" and headed straight from the airport to the links. "Even a blind pig finds his way," he said, shifting into his Southern Boy lingo.

Upstairs at the hotel, a crowd of leaders from business, media, government, and academia gathered to discuss "Spiritual Life in a Secular Society" and "Women as Leaders" and to ask the President and First Lady questions. Downstairs, at the beauty shop, the girls were dishing dirt. "I thought they'd be more tight-lipped," said a woman who was getting her nails done, referring to a White House staffer who had just left the shop. "She told us it's standard procedure for new, young female employees to make the trip to the Oval Office, and if he's interested, the President hits on them."

Upstairs, in the "About Shame" session, Ben Wattenberg, author of *Values Matter Most*, and sex therapist Dr. Ruth Westheimer discussed "Morals, Manners and Today's Pop Culture." Downstairs, the valet staff was buzzing about the grand arrival of Barbra Streisand. "She had the heaviest 10 suitcases I ever lifted and she wouldn't talk to any of us. She stood by herself, dressed in black, with her back to everyone and if approached, she turned away. When we took her upstairs to her penthouse suite on the beach, all she said was 'Where's the rest of it?' She had the valet girl unpack everything in her suitcases. She asked the same girl to come in and repack her luggage on her day off. 'People who need people' to reload their underwear."

Upstairs, Streisand empathized with ex-Senator Larry Pressler about his recent election defeat, citing similar setbacks suffered by the heroine of her recent movie *The Mirror Has Two Faces*. At dinner, Ms. Streisand was in a good mood, sitting at the head table between her boyfriend, James Brolin, and the President. Downstairs, Renaissance guests were talking about how to keep her from being invited next year. "At dinner, she strolls in and gets in front of all of us, just cuts in line. Everyone except her—Pulitzer Prize winners, ambassadors, Nobel winners—wears their name tag."

Upstairs, the President was listening to Harold Kushner, author of *When Bad Things Happen To Good People*. Chuck Robb, the Senator who was caught getting a massage from a topless centerfold, was a panelist in the "What I've Learned About Love" session. His mother-in-law, Lady Bird Johnson, was there. Prosecutor Kenneth Starr wasn't in attendance at the invitation-only weekend. He missed the "Renaissance Laughter" session with film writer Patty Marx, author of *You Can Never Go Wrong By Lying*.

After leaving the Renaissance New Year's Eve party at 1:45 A.M., Bill Clinton told reporters the weekend lacked luster and that something was missing this year. "We've got to do some thinking about how to recover some of that sense of intimacy," said the President. Downstairs, the staff breathed a collective sigh of relief as the Renaissancers headed for their cabs. "Thank God they're gone," said our waitress, a friend of the detained waiter. "They were in the hotel kitchen with about 1,000 bomb-sniffing dogs. I'm afraid of dogs."

Ralph R. Reiland is a professor of economics at Robert Morris College.

What Welfare Reform?

by Don Barnett

President Clinton has vowed to correct portions of welfare reform that are "carried out on the backs of immigrants." About half of the projected savings from the reform comes from limiting immigrant access to welfare. Refugees, who make up about one in seven legal immigrants, were spared most of the restrictions placed on other immigrants in the welfare bill. Refugees, asylees, and others admitted in humanitarian categories are still eligible for all welfare programs upon arrival, but must become citizens to maintain eligibility beyond five years.

There are more than 300,000 refugees and their children dependent on AFDC in California, a caseload which exceeds the total of all AFDC cases in each of 38 states. Those dependent upon programs such as AFDC face the same usage limits and lifetime caps as American citizens. But, far from block grants and time limits, refugee retirees' entitlement to a lifetime of public assistance starting upon arrival is basically untouched by either program of welfare or immigration reform.

Elderly noncitizens now account for 49 percent of total cash payments made to the elderly under Supplemental Security Income (SSI), the means-based welfare program for the elderly and disabled. The usage of SSI by noncitizens has increased sevenfold in the past 12 years; the largest portion of welfare savings depends upon slowing the growth of this program. Absent successful reform, noncitizen usage is projected to grow at

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an annual rate of 16 percent, reaching a cost of $45 billion in six years for Medicaid and SSI alone. Even with welfare reform this picture may not change much. A historic tide of naturalizations has guaranteed that noncitizen welfare dependence will simply continue as citizen dependence. (Until recently, citizen usage of SSI was declining.) Furthermore about 40 percent of recent growth is in humanitarian categories which are not affected by the reforms.

Few images have captured the imagination of opinion-shapers like that of elderly immigrants losing their welfare benefits. Molly Ivins, in a typical piece about elderly immigrants and SSI, writes about those who "worked hard, paid their taxes . . . now talking about committing suicide. Just what we always wanted to do: drive a bunch of retired Japanese gardeners and 80-year-old Hispanics whose backs are bent from years of field work to commit suicide." For the record, most noncitizen users of SSI are not Hispanic, and Japanese comprise less than *half a percent* of noncitizen users. Moreover, any legal immigrant who has lived in America for five years, which would cover virtually all current noncitizen users of SSI, need only endure the indignity of a dumbed-down citizenship procedure to continue receiving benefits without interruption.

The profile of those who have contributed most to recent growth in immigrant SSI usage is very nearly the opposite of that propagated by the "imagineers" of the national media—that is, they are *recent arrivals* who have not worked in the United States. Between 1992 and 1994 about 165,605 immigrants arrived from the former Soviet Union, currently the second largest source of immigration to the United States. Over 12 percent of these were 65 or over upon arrival, an additional 10 percent were between the ages of 55 and 64. Virtually all of the elderly and near-elderly arrived as refugees. Since the retirement age in their homeland is 55 for women and 60 for men, many of these "think of themselves as pensioners at an earlier age than would be customary in the U.S.," according to the U.S. Office of Refugee Resettlement.

Not surprisingly, former Soviets have zoomed to second place among noncitizen users of SSI. With their usage growing at a rate of 33 percent a year, they will overtake Mexicans within four years, an astonishing feat considering that large-scale migration from the former Soviet Union began only eight years ago. Following the former Soviets in order of SSI usage are Cubans and Vietnamese, both admitted in humanitarian categories.

A 1995 Health and Human Services study of refugees who arrived in the preceding five years (about 620,000) found 61 percent of the group to be receiving Food Stamps and about half to be Medicaid recipients. About half of the refugee households in the five-year group receive cash assistance through AFDC, SSI, or local General Assistance in spite of the fact that the majority are joining family members who settled in previous waves. About 21 percent of families have one *or more* members receiving cash assistance through SSI.

Given the hysteria roused by the modest commitment now being asked of those who immigrate to the United States, it is understandable that lawmakers would rather avoid the added accusation that the reforms are being "carried out on the backs of poor refugees." And if it is to be meaningful and fair, welfare reform must be part of a complete overhaul of the federal government's obligation to the individual. Obviously other beneficiaries of government largesse must eventually do their part to achieve that realignment. But even welfare reform, the smallest and presumably the easiest of the "personal responsibility" reforms, will stop dead on the day Americans are pushed off the dole to make room for foreign nationals.

Don Barnett writes from Brentwood, Tennessee.

ECONOMICS

The Earth Belongs to the Living

by William J. Quirk

The President and Congress have both promised us a balanced budget in the year 2002. The debt, at that time, will be somewhere between six and seven trillion dollars, which, assuming a seven percent interest rate, will cost close to $450 billion a year in interest. Each year, every year, forever. Is it plausible to think the new generation will pick up that perpetual burden? How can the country equitably deal the debt burden?

Debt can only be disposed of in five ways: one, by paying it off; two, by repudiating it; three, by inflation—which is a veiled repudiation; four, by conquering the creditor to cancel the debt or conquering a third party to seize sufficient wealth to pay off the debt; or, five, by large real growth which makes the debt service a smaller share of a growing pie. If large real growth is unlikely, and conquest unpalatable, only the first three methods are available. The classic approach is inflation. The United States, since the Vietnam War, has used consistent inflation, usually around three percent, to reduce our debt. Inflation can be a successful method if no new debt is incurred, but continuing large deficits, and the new borrowing to cover them, have overwhelmed the tactic.

The Founders, other than Hamilton, believed that a perpetual debt was incompatible with self-rule, since the current generation cannot be asked to pay for decisions they did not make. Thomas Jefferson, during his term, reduced the national debt by one-third despite paying cash to Napoleon for Louisiana. "If we go to war now," Jefferson wrote to James Monroe in 1805, "I fear we may renounce forever the hope of seeing an end of our national debt. If we can keep at peace eight years longer, our income, liberated from debt, will be adequate to any war, without new taxes or loans, and our position and increasing strength put us *hors d'insulte* from any nation." Jefferson, in 1804, listed cutting taxes, cutting expenses, and reducing the national debt as the highest accomplishment of his first term: "To do without a land tax, excise, stamp tax, and the other internal taxes, to supply their places by economies so as still to support the government properly and to apply $7,300,000 a year steadily to the payment of the public debt." Jefferson foresaw that a debt policy, such as Hamilton fostered, would be complicated and promote the centralization of power. Jefferson wrote James Madison in 1796 that "the accounts of the United States ought to be, and may be, made as simple as those of a common farmer, and capable of being understood by common farmers." Things did not turn out as Jefferson hoped.

Our economists, unlike Jefferson, fail

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to distinguish between private borrowing and public borrowing: they think the issue is whether the annual income stream (tax revenues) is able to support the annual interest cost. But the real issue is whether a $450 billion annual charge—with no return—is socially and politically sustainable. Does anyone think a 20-year-old earning $10 an hour, or $20,000 a year, can afford to pay $4,234 in federal and state income tax and Social Security tax? That amount, invested each year for 45 years at seven percent interest, would give a nest egg of $1,268,000. The present value of all the Social Security benefits he will receive, starting in 2041, assuming the system still exists, is an unimpressive $12,400. The present value of health benefits he will receive is $25,800, and of welfare benefits, $20,500. The difference between $59,700—the present value of all the benefits he will ever receive—and $1,268,000 is a very expensive government for someone making $10 an hour.

Can a government survive when so many resources are allocated to pay for inherited liabilities? Can a moral, orderly society survive if it does? The debt, because of doubts on both scores, destroys the value of the currency. The fear is that history will probably repeat itself, and the country will stoke up inflation to reduce the effective burden of an unsupportable debt. Inflation may stay within bounds, as it has, barely, for the past 20 years. Or it may run out of control and destroy the currency as it did in Weimar Germany in 1923. The Weimar inflation destroyed the middle class, the basis of any democracy, and made way for Hitler. Either way, when the currency's value is unpredictable, individuals can't plan for a child's education, business cannot look very far ahead, and the country is disoriented.

Jefferson, in a September 6, 1789, letter to James Madison, said he thought it self-evident "that the earth belongs in *usufruct* [trust] to the living, that the dead have neither powers nor rights over it." In 1823, Jefferson wrote to Thomas Earle, "That our Creator made the earth for the use of the living and not of the dead; that those who exist not can have no use nor right in it, no authority or power over it; that one generation of men cannot foreclose or burden its use to another, which comes to it in its own right and by the same divine beneficence; that a preceding generation cannot bind a succeeding one by its laws or contracts." The current generation, in other words, holds the land as a life tenant does; he is entitled to cultivate the land and enjoy the fruits of it, but he can't hurt the interest of those who are to come after. He should turn the land over in the same condition he received it. Each generation is the steward for the earth during its lifetime.

Assume, Jefferson wrote, that Louis XV borrowed so much from the bankers of Genoa that the interest on the debt came to equal the whole annual net profit of France: "Should the present generation of Frenchmen deed their property to the Genoese creditors and leave their homeland? No. They have the same rights over the soil on which they were produced, as the preceding generation had. They derive these rights not from their predecessors, but from nature." No generation, by natural right, can oblige the next generation to pay its debts. If it could, it might, during its own time, "eat up the *usufruct* of the lands for several generations to come, and then the land would belong to the dead, and not to the living."

Jefferson concluded that it would be "wise and just" for the Constitution to declare that "neither the legislature, nor the nation itself, can validly contract more debt than they may pay within their own age, or within the term of 19 years." Not all borrowing, of course, leads to wasteful spending debt. Debt may be invested in beneficial infrastructure. The 1846 New York Constitutional Convention, applying Jeffersonian principles, provided that the state could contract no debt except by a law approved by a referendum. The debt, however, had to be for a single "work or object" and be accompanied by a new tax sufficient to pay interest and retire the debt within 18 years. Or the debt may be invested to acquire intangible assets—which the society considers beneficial—such as Pitt's Napoleonic Wars and our World War II and Cold War. But, because of the absence of checks, spending is far more likely to be wasteful when borrowing is permitted. If a country runs on a pay-as-you-go basis, whatever mistakes it makes will be paid for by those who made the mistakes.

Moreover, the requirement of immediate payment for government programs acts as an efficient brake on governmental enthusiasm. Debt, since it requires no immediate taxes, removes the fundamental limitation that to fund a program for the benefit of one group, the money has to be taken from a different group. Under pay-as-you-go, the payers must currently pay what the payees will currently receive. The payers are apt to resist—the issue must be discussed—and some compromise reached.

With a borrowing policy, as Jefferson saw, the rules are entirely different. The consent of the governed is not necessary. The executive proposes a program but now he meets no effective opposition, since the legislature is equally happy to spend money today that will have to be repaid by future taxpayers. The viciousness of the borrowing policy is that the taxpayer of tomorrow is not represented by any of the parties at the table. The burden is easily cast upon the unrepresented future. Programs can go forward that the current taxpayers are unwilling to pay for. Unpopular programs—such as the Vietnam War, the Great Society, and the Savings and Loan bailout—can move ahead. Of course, when programs go ahead without the consent of the governed, they are likely to tear the country apart.

Jefferson believed that the debt-making power was too dangerous for the federal government. Since it could not be safely limited, it had to be prohibited. Jefferson wrote to John Taylor, on November 26, 1798: "I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government of the genuine principles of its Constitution: *I mean an additional article, taking from the federal government the power of borrowing.*" (Emphasis added.)

Jefferson said in 1816 that the people, "not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom. And to preserve their independence, we must not let our leaders load us with perpetual debt." If the leaders load us with such debt, we will then be taxed "in our meat and in our drink" till we must, like the English, live on "oatmeal and potatoes; have no time to think, no means of calling the mismanagers to account; but be glad to obtain subsistence by hiring ourselves to rivet their chains on the necks of our fellow-sufferers." We will, at that point, "have no sensibilities left but for sinning and suffering. Then begins, indeed, the war of all against all."

William J. Quirk is a professor at the University of South Carolina School of Law.

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The Hundredth Meridian

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Year's End

The house key on its leather thong had nearly worn through the corner of the mailing envelope in which it had arrived. The gate latch was a loose affair operated by another thong, of a piece with the first, running through a circular hole in one of the upright planks that made the wooden gate. I drew back on the latch and pulled the gate toward me, crossed the patio behind the adobe wall, and fitted the key to the lock. The door opened smoothly inward and I entered the house with the north wind at my back, pushing hard against the door to press it shut. "We made it," I said aloud.

The house looked the same as when I had last visited it in September except for the framed bullfight posters on the west wall of the big room. I crossed the tile floor to the kitchen, lifted the telephone from its recessed shelf, and dialed Jim Catron in Contreras.

"I made it," I said when he picked up.

"Welcome to New Mexico. Can you get over here in 30 minutes?"

"No."

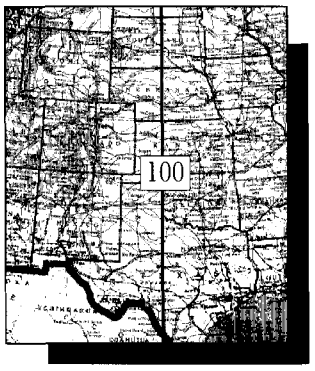
"Come tomorrow night then. Lyle is making chicken enchiladas with green chile. It's traditional with the Catrons."

"I need to unpack."

"You can't spend New Year's Eve alone."

"Yes I can."

The western sky was electric blue streaked with flaming pink and orange clouds above the violet outline of the San Mateo Mountains and the black berg called Ladrone Peak. In the 36 hours and 768 miles coming down from Wyoming three feet of snow had melted or evaporated from the bed of the pickup truck, leaving the spare tire resting once more on the steel floor. I took the parrots in their travel cages from the cab, carried them indoors, and put them in the guest bedroom away from the cat who presently descended from the loft, waving her tail graciously, to welcome me. When I had brought in the suitcases and the book boxes wrapped in plastic trash bags I built a fire in the wood stove, put the cat out, and fixed a drink. Outside the sunset colors faded, blending with the scent of cedar smoke from the hearth. It



was warm enough still to sit out on the portal for a single drink.

I carried the glass outside and sat against the wall of the house facing the eastern mountains turning rose-colored beneath the pine-forested peaks where the shining snow lingered from the last storm. While I sat drinking with my feet on the low wall of the portal a covey of quail emerged from the grama grass to drink from the pond and scratch in the surrounding dirt while the sentinel bird watched from a wooden bench. The summer before Jim Rauen, having a highball on the portal, saw a turtle break from the desert bushes, paddle rapidly across the bare ground, and dive into the water among the lily pads on the far side of the pond. Ignoring the schools of panicked minnows, the turtle surfaced the next morning and demanded food, acceptable in the form of hamburger meat rolled into pellets and fed to him by hand at the water's edge. Now he slept in the mud at the bottom of the pond, slowly processing hamburger and working up a prodigious appetite to emerge with him in the spring. I finished the drink and went indoors, fixed a fresh one, and drank it while the water boiled for beans and rice. I ate them with chipotle sauce and a glass of red wine. Then I let the cat back in and went to bed, leaving the dishes in the sink and the fire to burn itself out with the penultimate day of the year. Before retiring I took from one of the suitcases the old Confederate pistol I had brought with me from the north and placed it on the table beside the bed. Following Second Manassas, the verification by an officer on McClellan's staff who had attended West Point with R.H. Chilton, an adjutant general to Robert E. Lee, of Chilton's handwriting on a critical battle order allowed the Union commander to move against Lee, on his way to attack Harper's Ferry, at South Mountain. Surrounded in the darkness by roosting birds in a silent house that was not my house but was home anyway, I fell asleep. My body is not my house, either.

All things draw to water on the desert. Boiling coffee next morning I saw through the window a redtailed hawk standing in water above his leggings, watching the house with a round yellow eye that never blinked. He stayed for more than an hour, and left without my seeing him go. After his departure the quail reappeared at a run across the gravel toward the pond, wobbly and ridiculous, as if their flightedness were lost in absence of mind. Individuals survive for a year and a half or two years, barely long enough to grow to maturity, hatch a brood, and raise it. In the middle of winter when the pond freezes over they skate on the ice, sliding and falling on their beaks, not thinking to spread their wings. Their globular bodies supported by twiggy legs, each one of the overlapping gray, white, and brown feathers placed precisely within the overall pattern, look perfectly made above their perfect reflections in the still water. I let the parrots out to play and fed them, then took a walk along the Santa Fe track crossing the east mesa from the railroad yard at Belen to Blue Springs Canyon in the eastern mountains.

Walking on the crossties between the rails I watched the signal light turn green ahead and listened for the locomotive blowing at the Burris ranch crossing beyond the long cut. Each began as a liquid glow beyond the perspective point, refined itself into three lights arranged triangularly, and acquired a train behind it as the engine approached. The blunt red nose with its yellow emblem emerged from the diesel hum and the whine of the transmission, and then the four locomotive units went by in a blast of bittersweet exhaust. The rails flexed, falling and rising beneath a mile of passing freight cars, and when the train was gone the emptiness on the desert felt as complete as before the Spanish made

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their way north from Old Mexico, up the Rio Grande trench to the settlement at Santa Fe; following the river backward toward its origins in the Sangre de Christo mountains at the beginning of time, traveling in reverse direction to the Zuni in their muddy pueblos whose baked roofs Coronado's scouts mistook for gold, and behind them the Anasazi, doomed by an accommodation to their high desert home that was too much aesthetic, too little ecological. The Sandia, Manzano, and Pino mountains, the San Mateos and the Magdalenas, Ladrone Peak and the volcanic necks west of Albuquerque: these great natural landmarks remain unchanged, to human sight at least, four centuries after the Spanish caravans first traversed the Camino Real and Apache braves raided and killed along the Jornado del Muerte, and 134 years exactly after Brigadier General George H. Sibley led a Confederate force north from El Paso to ambush and defeat by a volunteer army of trappers and miners at Glorieta Pass north of Albuquerque, then back to El Paso again, taking a detour west around the San Mateo mountains. As Sibley and his men retreated south they were flanked by Union forces across the river, who skirmished with them outside the hamlet of Los Lunas. Fifty miles farther south at Contreras, Jim Catron recently unearthed the metal frame of an 1858 Remington .44 caliber revolver while reclaiming his land from the salt cedar breaks growing up from the river bottom. Catron guessed from the empty cylinder, annealed by rust to the frame, that the weapon had been thrown away in desperation by its Union possessor, or that it had fallen to the ground when he was shot. One hundred and thirty-four years later the War for Southern Independence persists, in other forms and guises and with effects utterly different from those that Grant or Lee could possibly have envisioned at Appomattox Courthouse.

I faced about and saw that the brown pall over Albuquerque had been swept away by gray storm clouds supported by an anvil base cutting against the blue sky. Sliding south the cloud built steadily back from the mountains, overshadowing the valley and obscuring it with veils of dust. Dust blew into my eyes and nose and tumbleweeds scraped under the barbed wire fencing and rolled across the railroad grade. The wind whistled in the electrical wires beside the track and one of the Air Force's old transport planes roared overhead, attempting to return to base in Albuquerque. I drew my hat brim over my face and pushed into the funnel of yellow dust along the service road, past yuccas vibrating like clumps of whirring green knives. At Tierra Grande the screening cypress tress bent above the tiled roofs of the houses. Inch-high waves swept the surface of the pond and wind rattled the swamp cooler on the roof and banged the skylight as I went from room to room in the house switching on lights. The lights flickered several times, browned, and went out for good, and I brought candles from the cupboard and sat in the kitchen reading a book beside an iron candelabrum while outside the dust clouds darkened through shades of gray and purple to black. They settled when the wind dropped and died, and a clear afterlight appeared in the sky above the mountains as if the clouds had blotted the night and carried it with them to earth. I washed up by candlelight and went to bed with the birds, leaving the old year to expire and the new one to be born in silence and the dark.

Deep in the night I awoke and lay in darkness listening for the sound that had wakened me. I was nearly asleep again when I heard it: sharp, lonely, and defiant, unmistakable. Quietly I slipped from the bed, climbed the wooden staircase to the loft, and looked down through an east window on the pond. Its surface was still and silver in the moonlight, eclipsing the pale sand between the clumps of sagebrush and grass. As I looked the sound came a third time, undisguised and very close, drawing my eyes to the right-angled figure terminating in the pointed upraised muzzle. The lever-action varmint rifle stood propped behind me against the loft rail. Gently raising the window I felt the desert cold on my face and the warm interior air on the back of my neck as it slipped past me into the night. He was a big coyote, edged by moonlight in the ends of his long winter coat as he shifted his weight on his haunches and howled again, the free voice of the wild and the wild voice of the free, past and present, forever and ever. I watched him until my face was stiff with the cold and all the warmth of the house seemed to have flowed away and dispersed itself in the night. Then I shut the window carefully not to interrupt the music, went downstairs, and got into bed again among the parrots, muttering and ruffling their feathers in the darkness.

I was up at dawn to make coffee and light a fire in the stove, using the supplementary sections of the three- and four-day-old newspapers I had brought down from Salt Lake City and Cortez, Colorado, to get the flames started. When the cedar logs were burning strongly I poured coffee and drank the pot while I read the news sections. The sun got up behind the Manzanos and a solitary robin arrived to drink at the margin of ice around the rocky perimeter of the pond. The air was still, the sky opalescent above the dark mountains. It was going to be a fine day, perhaps even a good year. I cut a green apple and fed it to the parrots for their breakfast. Then I called Jim Catron in Contreras.

"Are you going over to Reserve soon?"

"The commission meets Monday. Do you want to ride along?"

"Of course."

"We'll burn a couple of steaks when we get home. Or some other politically incorrect thing."

"It's a good start anyway."

"And drink good whiskey."

"Even better."

"We're going to win. Maybe not in our lifetime. But we are going to win."

"That will be good enough for me."

"Happy New Year to you."

"Yes. Happy New Year." c

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